

SMITH'S

MAGAZINE

MARCH, 1916
15 CENTS

Best Stories
of the
Month

Two Novelettes
Ten Short Stories
Beauty Department
Illustrations

STREET & SMITH
PUBLISHERS
NEW YORK




OSTRACIZED

BY

HELEN
R.
MARTIN

HOW would you feel if you were ostracized? If people refused to associate with you? And you had no idea of the reason?

Smith's Magazine for April has the start of the greatest woman's story in years. A woman's fight against scandal, against ignorance, against circumstance—and the final triumph. The greatest book of a great author. The April number of *Smith's*—out March 3rd.



Chas. H. Hall

Victor Records



The superb interpretations of artists famous in the world of song

Victor Records bring you not only the actual living voices of the world's greatest opera stars, but the art and personality of concert singers famous the country over.

These talented artists who charm thousands of music-lovers on their concert tours are also the delight of countless other thousands who know them mainly through their Victor Records.

Victor Records *are* the actual artists absolutely true to life—ever ready to entertain any one at any time.

There are Victor dealers in every city in the world who will gladly give you a complete catalog of the more than 5000 Victor Records and play any music you wish to hear.

Important warning. Victor Records can be safely and satisfactorily played only with *Victor Needles or Tungs-tone Stylus* on Victor or Victrolas. Victor Records cannot be safely played on machines with jeweled or other reproducing points.



Victor Talking Machine Co.
Camden, N. J., U. S. A.
Berliner Gramophone Co., Montreal
Canadian Distributors

New Victor Records demonstrated at all dealers on the 28th of each month

Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements.

Learn Piano Better & Faster

Obtain free book showing how QUINN WRITTEN METHOD saves three-quarters of time and money usually necessary to learn piano or organ. Scientific and systematic method, yet practical and simple. Play chords immediately, and a complete piece within few lessons. Successfully used by Dr. Quinn. Successful graduates everywhere. Learn at home either as a social accomplishment or for teaching. Diploma granted. Practice in spare time whenever you wish. For either adults or children. Special terms this month. Send today for FREE book "How to Learn Piano and Organ." No obligation. M. L. Quinn Conservatory, Box 880-VG, Chicago.

A Civil Service Job For YOU

There are many fine openings in the Railway Mail, Post Office and other government branches for American citizens in and over. Let us show you how Mr. Patterson, a former U. S. Civil Service Secretary-Examiner, can help you obtain one of these positions. Booklet in C gives full particulars. It's free, without obligation. Write today.

Patterson Civil Service School, Rochester, N. Y.

SHORT HAND IN 30 DAYS

Boyd Syllabic System—written with only nine characters. No "positions"—no "ruled lines"—no "shading"—no "word-signs"—no "cold notes." Speedy, practical system that can be learned in 30 days of home study, utilizing spare time. For full descriptive matter, free, address, Chicago Correspondence Schools, 977 Unity Building, Chicago, Ill.

COPY THIS SKETCH

and let me see what you can do with it. You can earn \$30.00 to \$150.00 or more per week, as illustrator or cartoonist. My practical system of personal individual lessons by mail will develop your talent. Fifteen years successful work for newspapers and magazines qualifies me to teach you.

Send me your sketch of President Wilson with 6 in. stamps and I will send you a test lesson plate, also collection of drawings showing possibilities for YOU.

THE LANDON SCHOOL, and Cartooning
1444 Schofield Bldg., Cleveland, O.



Help Wanted

for civil service positions. Big pay; steady work; short hours; regular vacations; rapid advancement; many vacancies this year. Uncle Sam needs men. I will give you the training you need.

Good Salaries Are Offered

From \$500 to \$1800 a year. Lifetime employment. You can qualify in a short time for one of these positions. Write today. For my free book SEE 1001 tells all about these splendid positions. EARL HOPKINS, Washington, D. C.

My Magazine "Investing for Profit"

FREE for Six Months

Send me your name and address right NOW and I will send you investing for Profit magazine absolutely free for six months. It tells how to get the utmost earnings from your money—how to tell good investments—how to pick the most profitable of sound investments. It reveals how bankers and capitalists make \$1,000 grow to \$22,000—in fact gives you the vital investing information that should enable you to make your money grow proportionately. I have decided this month to give 500 six month subscriptions to investing for Profit FREE. Every copy is

Worth at Least \$10

to every investor—perhaps a fortune. Send your name and address now, mention this ad and a Free introductory subscription. Conditions may repeat this offer. Better take it now. You'll be willing to pay 10c a copy after you have read it six months.

B. L. BARBER, Pub., R 418 30 W. Jackson Blvd., Chicago

Personal Influence



That force of personality variously termed "Will Power," "Personal Magnetism," "Stamina," etc.—the thing that more than anything else spells the difference between success and failure—is born in every individual and needs but little cultivation to be brought forth in all its strength. In the race for money, position, power, love and all that makes for complete happiness, you are easily handicapped without an understanding of this power. My system equips you in a practical way to influence—yes, control others. Years of success and thousands of delighted students vouch for its quick results. Write today for my

ILLUSTRATED TREATISE FREE

& FULL PARTICULARS FREE. It tells about this wonderful influence and how you may yourself master it in your own home with the assurance of guaranteed success. Don't send any money, but send name and address at once for this Free Treatise.

M. D. BETTS, Sta. 604, Jackson, Mich.



Typewriters

—All Makes, Factory Rebuilt by the famous "Young Process," guaranteed like new. Our big business permits lowest prices—\$10 and up; machines rented—or sold on time. Satisfaction guaranteed or money back. Rentals apply on purchase price.

Write for Catalog

YOUNG TYPEWRITER COMPANY
Dept. 458 CHICAGO



Bring Out the Hidden Beauty

Beneath the soiled, discolored, faded or aged complexion is one fair to look upon. Mercolized Wax gradually, gently absorbs the devilish surface skin, revealing the young, fresh, beautiful skin underneath. Used by refined women who prefer complexions of true naturalness. Have you tried it?

Mercolized Wax in one ounce package, with directions for use, sold by all druggists.

A Rider Agents Wanted



in each town to ride and show a new 1918 model "RANGER" bicycle. Write for our liberal terms.

DELIVERED FREE on approval and 30 days' trial. Send for big free catalog and particulars of most marvelous offer ever made on a bicycle. You will be astonished at our low prices and remarkable terms.

FACTORY CLEARING SALE—a limited number of old models of various makes, \$7 to \$12. A few good second-hand wheels \$5 to \$8. Write if you want a bargain. Tires, lamps, wheels, sundries and repair parts at all makes of bicycles, at half usual prices. Write us before buying.

MEAD CYCLE CO., DEPT. H38 CHICAGO



EARN \$2,000 TO \$10,000 A YEAR

We will teach you to be a high grade salesman, in eight weeks at home and assure you definite proposition from a large number of reliable firms who offer our students opportunities to earn Big Pay while they are learning. No former experience required. Write today for particulars, list of hundreds of good openings and testimonials from hundreds of our students now earning \$100 to \$500 a month. Address nearest Office, Dept. 504 NATIONAL SALESMEN'S TRAINING ASSN.

Chicago New York San Francisco

Vol. XXII

No. 6

SMITH'S MAGAZINE

A PUBLICATION FOR THE HOME

CONTENTS

FOR - MARCH - 1916

A Free Spirit —A Novelette	Grace Margaret Gallaher	901
Illustrated by Clarence Rowe.		
A Nation's "Character" —An Essay	Emily Newell Blair	933
The Fulfillment —A Story	Rebecca Hooper Eastman	935
Illustrated by R. Van Buren.		
The Peace of the Hills —Verse	Henry Herbert Knibbs	949
The One Chance —A Story	Grace Lea Army.	950
Illustrated by G. W. Harting.		
How They Succeeded —A Fact-Story	Virginia Middleton	959
Illustrated by Laura E. Foster.		
A Livery Man —A Story	Carolyn Wells	969
Illustrated by Mayo Bunker.		
A March Promise —Verse	Rheem Douglas	976
A Sheaf of New Leaves —A Story	Anne O'Hagan	977
Illustrated by Robert A. Graef.		
Mary Rose and Old Man Flaherty —A Story	Hildegard Lavender	994
Illustrated by E. A. Furman.		
Why I Like an Exciting Town	Mary Patterson	1003
Illustrated by Harold Thomas Denison.		
A Prayer —Verse	Theodora Zakrzewski	1008
Going After It —A Story	Holman F. Day	1009
Illustrated by Victor Perard.		
Two Lovers Sat By Me —Verse	Mary Carolyn Davies	1024
Captain Barrett's Parrot —A Nautical Ballad	Wallace Irwin	1025
Youth Takes Its Turn —A Story	Mary Hedges Fisher	1027
Illustrated by H. F. Nonnamaker.		
The Circle —A Novelette	Leigh Gordon Giltner	1033
Illustrated by E. C. Caswell.		
"Ave, Maria!" —A Story	Errol Revel	1070
Vespers —Verse	Arthur Wallace Peach	1072
"Ostracized" —An Editorial Talk		1073
Water in Relation to Health and Beauty	Doctor Lillian Whitney	1075
Illustrated with Photographs.		

YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION \$1.50

SINGLE COPIES 15 CENTS

Monthly publication issued by SMITH PUBLISHING HOUSE, 79-89 Seventh Avenue, New York City.
 ORMOND G. SMITH, President, 79 Seventh Avenue, New York City; GEORGE C. SMITH, Secretary and Treasurer, 79
 Seventh Avenue, New York City. Copyright, 1916, by SMITH PUBLISHING HOUSE, in the United States and Great
 Britain. All Rights Reserved. Publishers everywhere are cautioned against using any of the contents of this
 Magazine either wholly or in part. Entered as Second-class Matter, at the New York Post Office, according to an
 Act of Congress, March 3, 1879, by SMITH PUBLISHING HOUSE.

WARNING—Do not subscribe through agents unknown to you. Complaints are daily made by persons thus victimized.
 IMPORTANT—Authors, agents and publishers are requested to note that this firm does not hold itself responsible for loss of unsolicited
 manuscripts while at this office or in transit, and that it cannot undertake to hold uncalled for manuscripts for a longer period than six
 months. If the return of manuscript is expected, postage should be enclosed.

COLUMBIA



RECORDS

Double-Disc

EVERYBODY joins in when the Columbia Grafonola plays the big song hits of the day.

But the latest "hits," *first* recorded and *best* recorded on Columbia Double-Disc Records, are only an indication, a temptation, a foretaste of the life, the fun, the sentiment, the classic beauty offered in the complete catalogue of Columbia Records, free on request at your dealer's.

New Columbia Records on sale the 20th of every month.

Columbia Graphophone Co.

Woolworth Bldg., New York

Prices in Canada Plus Duty.



Columbia Grafonola 110—
Price \$130



Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements.

SMITH'S MAGAZINE

Volume 22

MARCH, 1916

Number 6

A Free Spirit

By Grace Margaret Gallaher

Author of "Strangers in Pettipaug," "A Little Story in the Night," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY CLARENCE ROWE

RICHIE, you deem Keturah would fancy a blue paper or a pink one for her keepin' room?"

Richard Ladd wished, as twenty times before, his mother would not give his little girl that ridiculous name, and said, as twenty times before:

"Mother, why ain't you willin' to call her 'Tyke,' same as everybody does, even Elder Watrous?"

Mrs. Ladd replied without irritation; that "triflin'" way of life was never hers.

"It's her name, son, an' I view it her folks intended she should go by it, else they never would have christened her so in holy baptism that I was present to myself, the most tejus day of that whole winter, the thermometer goin' clear down below zero an' me havin' to wrap you all up in shawls, there bein' no one to home to mind you, an' me feelin' it wasn't neighborly to her folks that was strangers in Pettipaug to absent myself."

There was never the least use arguing with his mother—Richard had learned that long ago; for she drowned out the issue in a flood of words. So he laughed good-naturedly, and put a chunk of wood on the fire before leav-

ing. The Widow Ladd clicked her needles placidly in the calm of victory; then returned to her point.

"Keturah's real dark-complected." She herself was fair as a rose. "Maybe pink'll set her best. It's a dreadful perishin' shade o' paper, but still it's her keepin' room; it ain't likely she'll let the sun in onto it, to fade it."

"Pink will be real pretty, dear. You goin' to get 'Siah Chadwick to put it on for you?"

"I guess I ain't so wore out I can't paper a room myself, if I am the wrong side o' sixty."

"Don't look a day over forty," her son retorted gallantly, and kissed the top of her smooth hair.

The widow glanced out of the window to see if any passer-by had marked this "shaller conduct" on the part of a grown man. Reassured, she smiled up at her son, and permitted herself a tribute to her own values.

"I was called a handsome girl when your father wedded me."

"Handsome girl still, Ann Janette."

"Now, don't you be gettin' saucy to your poor old mother!" She smacked the big hand resting on her shoulder in high good humor.



The Widow Ladd was indeed a picture of elderly sweetness and peace; small and dainty and trim, like some little bird, with a rosebud mouth, silvery-shining hair, and round, innocent blue eyes.

The Widow Ladd was indeed a picture of elderly sweetness and peace; small and dainty and trim, like some little bird, with a rosebud mouth, silvery-shining hair, and round, innocent blue eyes. From her cradle, the widow had focused those orbs steadily on her own wishes, and as steadily had turned them away from the interests of others, till they had gained an expression of deep calm.

Richard seated himself in the doorway, open to the first soft breath of spring, and looked up through the veil of new leaves to the slender sickle of the moon. How Tyke loved the moon-

light! He had seen her dance with her shadow like a creature out of herself. Thoughts of her, her charm and her willfulness, stiffened his nerve.

"Pretty," he began—his favorite name—"I've been talkin' over this housekeepin' business with Tyke, an' she's got some ideas of her own on it."

The needles clicked on silently. The widow could keep quiet when she liked.

"She looks forward to a home o' her own."

Click—click!

Richard moistened his lips with his tongue.

"She's got an idea her an' me can set

up in the Gilbert place, now she's heired it for that ol' debt due her father."

"It's a dreadful poor, small fashion o' a house," Ann Janette replied mildly.

Her son knew that mildness of old, and hastened along somewhat tremulously.

"It's weatherproof, an' 'twill hold two."

"No sort o' contrivances in it." A glance of pride at her own modern stove and sink faucets.

"Well, Tyke thinks she can make out in it."

"You tell her it can't be?"

"Why, no, mother! I said I'd thresh it out with you."

The little figure straightened itself like a steel rod, the blue eyes gleamed icily.

"Richard Ladd, my only son an' protector, an' named for my dead an' drowned husband, did you let her judge for a moment that you could leave your poor old mother all stark alone in this great house?"

"Why, you ain't alone! Nancy an' Marcia's grown women, an' set everythin' by you."

"Daughters!" A Chinese contempt for the sex inflamed the words. "You're my only son!"

As this could not be denied, Richard took a new tack.

"It ain't but a step through the fence to Gilbert's house. You could set in your kitchen an' look right in on us eatin' breakfast."

"An' me that's had you opposite me at table three times a day for thirty year! I ain't goin' to be left desolate an' forlorn——"

"There's the girls!"

"I want my son, my only son—him that his father charged in his will to cherish his mother as long as she should live, an' heed her, an' be a dutiful son to——"

"But a wife's got some claim,

mother; an' Tyke says she's just obligated to live by herself, with none o' her kin nor none o' my kin 'long with her."

"I shouldn't view it she would want her kin, that shaller Kenton tribe, traipsin' round the country hitherty-yander, same as they were gypsies! An' she's just like 'em. Now, when a handsome, good home's offered her, an' a keepin' room all to herself, new papered in pink to set her complexion, an' me willin' for her to have company to tea once a week every week that's in the year, an' my best preserves an' fruit cake offered 'em, an' all my ribbon posy beds for her to plant with her brakes an' things out o' the woods, wants to live bride in a miserable hole o' a place hasn't been painted since battle o' Bunker Hill!"

"She wants to live alone," Richard murmured feebly.

"An' the Fifth Commandment, the only one with promise, says: 'Honor thy father an' thy mother,' an' I've been a good mother to you, Richie, workin' day an' night, after your father was took, to keep the roof over your head an' the bread in your mouth. An' I lay hard an' I et little, an' I never had so much as one new gown in four years, an' wore the same bonnet till I was ashamed to go to meetin'." Tears poured down her soft pink cheeks, sobs muffled her voice.

Accustomed as he was to tears from his mother, who cried as easily as a baby and with apparently as little devastating after effects, Richard could never endure her grief. He sprang up, ran to her side, and drew her into his arms.

"There, pretty, there, don't you take on! You're the best mother a boy ever had, an' all your children prize you more'n anythin' on earth."

"Not more'n a wife," Ann Janette waived. "Never more'n a wife. Poor old mother ain't any account any more; cast aside like a worn-out garment;

forsaken by her children——" A storm of sobs swept her.

"Mother, now, dear, I'd be next door, an' come in ten times a day."

"For a strange girl from over the mountain you ain't known but since Christmas, an' has carried on somethin' outrageous with every boy in the township, an' only took-up with you in the end 'cause you've got a grand farm, an' she's been told you'll heir my property from me when I'm in my grave, an' that won't be long to wait now, for grief an' bereavement an' desolation are hastenin' my feet downhill to it; an' I'll never see the spring come round again, an' like as not I won't be able to hold out till harvest, an' then you can build you a new house right atop o' my grave, if so be 'twill pleasure that high-flyer o' a Keturah Kenton, an'——"

"Mother, I'm a-goin' this minute to tell her she's *got* to live here with you!"

"She'll do it if you tell her, dear." The widow's eyes gleamed piercingly through her tears. "Be real downright with her, an' master her."

"I'll try." A vision of himself pursuing a butterfly across a meadow, or picking up quicksilver from a board, weakened his voice.

"Do, dearie, do; an' I'll set a sponge for plum bread for your breakfast." Miraculously composed and almost smiling, the widow dried her tears, and got out the mixing board.

Richard stood still as a stone in the middle of the road, and stared first at his own large, handsome dwelling, all a-gleam with new paint, and then at the crooked, black little building huddled under his eaves. "A plague on both your houses!" was the classic form of his thought. Then he strode off across the pastures to where his sweetheart lived with her uncle.

"If Tyke cuts up, I'll *shake* her." He thought, with acute pleasure, of gripping that thread of a creature in his

big grasp and jouncing her back and forth till all her curls bobbed.

Yet, when he found her sitting on the rock by the brook, he took her hand in his and kissed her very tenderly.

"Did you come a-lookin' for me, pussy?"

"Certainly I didn't! I heard the peepers callin' in the brook, an' I saw that weeny baby moon, an' I felt 'twas spring, an' I'd got to be out in it. But I'm dreadful pleased to see you, now you're here."

One could never tell about her. She might have been waiting there an hour, and then again she might not have thought of him till that moment. He gave it up, and plunged into things:

"Mother's takin' on awful about my leavin' home."

"Just to live next door?"

"She says 'twill kill her—she'll die heartbroke by fall."

"She won't."

"She's cut to the heart, though, an' you know I can't stand that. Why, Tyke, mother's been a saint an' a—hero, all her life. When father was drowned, he didn't leave her anythin' but the house, an' that up to its eyes in mortgage. She didn't have my uncle's property till 'bout five years ago. She worked an' toiled an' scrimped an' saved. I tell you, she *was* a hero!"

The girl drew close to him where they stood by the brook. The frogs croaked shrilly; the brook whispered in pleasant murmurs; away off in the pasture a sheep bell tinkled. Her eyes, very large and dark, gleamed as if some of the moonshine were caught in them.

"I know she's been good as gold, Dick"—she alone called him that—"but that don't make me any more willin' to live with her. I wouldn't want to live with *my own* mother, if I had one."

"I told her that."

"It ain't as if she was old an' sick an' poor an' lonesome. She's rich an'

she's strong, an' she's got two daughters home an' two more married just down by the bay, an' you'd be right underfoot, so to say, in the Gilbert house."

"I told her that." He said it with a mild persistence inherited from his mother.

"She's an unreasonable old"—Richard drew away sharply—"lady," the girl finished, a catch in her voice.

"An' you're a reasonable young one." He put her hands up around his neck. "Say, Tyke, old pal, you won't go back on me because of mother?"

"Never!"

"Then it's all square between us?"

"Square as a brick."

"An' we'll be wed quick as plantin's done?"

She pulled back in his hold.

"I'm goin' to live in my house, Dicky." But her voice was soft and inconsistent.

Richard bent close to see her in the silver dimness.

"Little dearie," he murmured, enchanted as always by her sylvan loveliness, her wild sweetness, "you're certain you won't go back on me? Promise!"

"I promise!"

The house was dark and still when Richard crept in to bed, yet he guessed by some quality in the silence of her room that his mother was still awake.

"Mother," he whispered through the open door, "it's all settled about us livin' here. Tyke's promised."

Ann Janette thought poorly of her son's marriage with any girl, especially with this one, a stranger since babyhood to the village, but she always bowed to the inevitable—when she recognized it!—and since she had won the point for which she had battled, she would be gracious.

"That's a good boy, son!" she whispered back. "An' she's a real sweet, pretty girl."

The exquisite June sunset flooded all the valley of Pettipaug with violet and rose and daffodil light; perfume of honeysuckle, locust, and fresh-cut hay drifted by on every wandering wind; and happy birds called thrillingly to one another.

"Mighty pleasant time o' year, Nancy." Cephas Orne greeted Nancy Ladd, alighting at the platform of the junction. "Just the season for bride an' groom to get under way."

Nancy laughed, and fastened the colt behind the station house.

"You expectin' folks, Ceph?"

Cephas was the husband of Nancy's oldest sister, Selina, and so many years his wife's senior that he was the age of the Widow Ladd herself.

"Why, I drove over to greet the bride an' groom. Rich's always been one o' my favorites. Nice boy."

"I wish he'd taken up with a different girl." Nancy drew close to the wagon and spoke in a low voice.

"Why, what's wrong with the one he's got?"

"Oh, she's well enough." Nancy had her mother's mild voice and fair face. "But she ain't our kind. Loves to go rammitin' off on the river or in the woods, 'fore she's so much as made her bed."

"Sho! Rich won't like *that*. He's been brought up with as competent housekeeper as you'll find in two counties."

"Oh, they're goin' to live with us. Didn't you know that?"

"They be!"

"Mother'd never have given her consent to the match if it'd been otherwise, an' you know how Rich sets by mother." Nancy snapped off each word primly at the end.

"But, Lordy, child, when I drove by the Gilbert place an hour ago, the girl's uncle was a-movin' in beddin' an' dishes, an' he called out he was fixin' up for the bride an' groom."



Richard and Tyke, very new as to clothes and red as to face, returned from their week's journey.

Nancy, who had been spending the day with a cousin at the junction, stared amazedly.

"But mother's given her the fore-room for her own, an' had it all fresh papered for her!" There seemed something so conclusive in this that she added calmly: "I don't view it there's anythin' in that story."

The whistle of the train cut off any argument on Cephas' side. Richard and Tyke, very new as to clothes and red as to face, returned from their week's journey to the northern part of the State as from Mesopotamia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia. They began at once asking the news.

"Rich, you drive home with your sister. Mrs. Rich, you come 'long with me."

Thus it was that Richard had no word with his wife till they stopped at his mother's gate.

"Why, Tyke"—he smiled up at her as he held out his arms to lift her down, welcoming her to his home—"somebody's livin' in the Gilbert house. I can see dishes an' like that."

Tyke smiled back, but her lips stiffened alarmingly.

"I'm livin' there."

Richard's arms fell to his sides. His eyes asked the question his tongue could not form.

"I'll tell you after supper. You help me right out."

In a trance of bewilderment, he lifted her to the ground.

It was a wonderful supper, with cold chicken, hot biscuit, three kinds of preserves, and four kinds of cake, and all the relations—aunts, uncles, and cousins—invited to it. So late evening had come before Richard could speak to Tyke alone.

His chance came while his mother and sisters were saying good-by to the last guests at the front door. Tyke stood in the foreroom, the light from a rose-colored lamp shadowing her vivid little face and pretty, wild hair. She looked tired and pale, but appealingly sweet. Richard faced her, a stiff figure in his unaccustomed "meetin' clothes."

"What's that you said 'bout the folks in the Gilbert house, dear?" he began gently.

"We're goin' to live there," gently, in her turn. "I've spent this first evenin' under your mother's roof, but now we're through visitin', we'll go *home*."

"Tyke! You promised!"

"I said I'd never desert you, an' I won't," passionately. "You'll come with me."

The young man stared at her in wretched bewilderment.

"But mother's made her mind all up to have us live with her."

"If we go right over, she can't do anythin' about it."

"It'll break her heart."

"It won't, either! Rich Ladd, don't you be such a goose! You come right over to our house——"

"It ain't our house; it's yours!"

"My house, then—an' act like a sensible man should. Your mother'll carry on, likely, to-night, but she'll be all right in the mornin'!"

"Tyke, dearie—little girl," he begged, "be good an' sweet, an' give in!" He

took a step toward her, holding out his arms to her.

She eluded him, and fronted him at the other end of the room. In the heat of the lamp, her hair clung moistly to her forehead, her cheeks were a hot red. Her dark eyes were deep with trouble, her face quivered.

"You listen to me, Dick," she pleaded in her turn. "Your mother don't like me—oh, yes, I can see it—an' I don't—know her. If we start in livin' in the same house together, we'll fret each other all sour an' mean. I know I'll be ready to *murder* somebody. We got different natures an' different ways, an' we'll *hate* each other. Just make the wrench now, once for all, an' 'twill be over."

Richard clenched his hands at his sides.

"Tyke Kenton, I'm your husband, an' in the law I got the right to command you to stay in this house. I do command you to stay!"

"I shan't do it!" Tyke answered, with swift defiance.

"I can hold you here all night with my two hands." His big fists were in her face.

She came close to him now, and grasped his right fist between her small hands.

"You can hold my body here, but my spirit will be livin' over there in the other house."

Dick actually groaned.

"An' we been married just a week! Darlin', don't you love me 'nough to sacrifice for me?" He put his arms around her.

"Dicky, dear boy, I can't sacrifice myself an' bring anythin' but misery from it." Her little quivering face was close to his now, bent low to it.

"Many a woman has lived with a mother-in-law she couldn't fellowship."

"I don't care! I ain't a-goin' to spend the night in this house. You may do as

you're a mind to. I'm a-goin' to my own home, right now!"

Upon that word, Ann Janette Ladd, herself, walked in upon them.

"Why, Richie, whatever's wrong? You an' Keturah ain't fallin' out a'-ready?" She pursed up her rosebud mouth and shook her silver head in amazed disapproval.

"No, no, we ain't quarrelin'," Tyke flashed back. "We're just settlin' how we'll make out to live."

"Right here in this good house." Ann Janette smiled with what she strove to make cordiality.

"I ain't goin' to live here. I always said I wouldn't, an' I won't now, an' I won't ever!" Tyke's voice rose in a passionate cry.

"An' I ain't goin' to have my only son took from me by *anybody*, an' me left desolate, when I gave up my best foreroom to you, an' crunched myself up into the clock room, that ain't half so sizable, nor hasn't got the sightly view o' the river, an' has the cellar stairs leadin' right out o' it, but I never grudged it to you nor my boy, neither, though:

"My daughter's my daughter all the days o' my life;

My son's my son till he gets him a wife.

"An' I toiled for him afore you was born. I hadn't heired my property then, an' it was dreadful hard, strugglin' work, an' now he'll leave me, his poor, old, forgotten mother." By this time, Ann Janette was sobbing ruthlessly.

Tyke fluttered out her hands in a wild gesture, and fled to the door. Her exit was barred by Nancy and Marcia, both weeping.

"Mother! Tyke!" Richard turned distractedly, first one way, then another. "Ain't there some way out that'll please all o' us?"

"Live one day with me an' one with her," his wife thrust at him in fierce irony.

The widow sank into a chair, weeping as if that and that only were the occupation of her life.

"She'll carry on that way for weeks!" groaned her son.

"Like she did when Selina wanted to study music in Boston," corroborated Marcia.

"An' when Rich said he was fixin' his plans to travel West," reminded Nancy.

Ann Janette rocked back and forth, moaning:

"The only son of his mother, an' she a widow! Him that's been in under this roof every night since he was born, till last week! An' now I've got to hear the wind an' rain roarin' round the house an' think he's a-sleepin' out in a strange bed away from his poor, old, forgotten mother. I don't feel so bereft days, but when night comes on an' he ain't here; I'll die, I know. I shall. A broken heart! A broken home! Oh! Oh! Oh!"

"My good laws an' fathers!" Tyke stamped furiously. "I should think this was the 'sylum to Middletown! You hark to me! I ain't goin' to have any home broke up by *me*, nor I ain't goin' to have any only son took off from his mother, an' I ain't goin' to be plagued out o' my life by inches, either! Dick, you sleep in this house an' eat your breakfasts with your mother, an' then you come over to my house to eat the rest o' your meals. If you don't all o' you stop your quarrelin', an' agree to that, I'll run away so fast there ain't anybody here will see me *again*, ever!"

Bewildered, Richard and his mother stared at each other.

"Why, Tyke," the man began dazedly, "that ain't any kind o' way to live. Folks never heard o' such goin's on!"

"Yes, they did, too. Your own great-grand-sire an' his wife switched back an' forth between her big house an' his little one for fifty year, here in this very Pettipaug, an' your own

grandfather an' grandmother—parents to *her*, there—would 'a' done it if both their houses hadn't ketched fire an' burned up. You told me about 'em your own self."

"They were Pettipaug talk all their lives, great-great-grandsire an' marm were. Ain't that so, mother?"

But the widow was a general of no mean order. She knew how an enemy may be driven to desperate deeds.

"Richie, dear"—her smooth tones only slightly roughened by the storm—"I deem that's the way out o' this hurrah-boys, now. You do as your wife says."

Without more parleying, the treaty was made.

Deep in the night, Dick, waking from the heavy sleep of physical and emotional weariness, crept to the window of his bedroom and leaned far out. The space between his house and his wife's was a mere grass-grown runway. The night was soft and still and black. He whistled their own secret signal, waited, then called:

"Tyke!"

A breath of sound: "Dick!"

"Slept any?"

"My, yes!"

"Ain't this an awful queer kind o' home-comin'?"

"Kind of."

"You scorn me for a poor coward?"

"My lands, no! Why, Joshua an' George Washington would 'a' been scared o' *her*! You go to sleep."

"Listen: I don't know as you'll get what I mean, but I prize you more'n anythin' in this whole world—more'n mother, even."

"Oh, I guess I can see things, if I am such a flaxabout. Good night—dear!"

Richard put his head in the kitchen door, shouting:

"Say, Tyke, drive over to the mills with me."

Tyke lifted a flushed face from the bowl in which she was stirring furiously.

"Can't go, Dick. I'm makin' batter cakes for supper, an' they won't bat!"

"Good news! See you get 'em stirred up proper good." He flung a hasty survey out of the window to see if any one in the big house was in his line of vision, then caught the cook in his arms and kissed her.

Tyke laughed and blushed adorably, then threatened him with the spoon.

"You'll addle 'em!"

Yet, when Richard drove out of the yard, very tall and straight on his high wagon, it was a sad-faced girl who watched him down the road.

"If his mother wasn't so everlastin', hallelujah virtuous, I could live over there with him!" Her eyes caught sight of Ann Janette, in cashmere shawl and second-best bonnet, stepping primly home from sewing society, her reticule dangling from two silk-mitted wrists. "Oh, my stars an' country, no!" The batter spun around in whirls chased by her flying spoon.

Richard's mind was filled with like thoughts.

"Ain't it queer how women get set again' each other? Now, mother's as pleasant as new cream, just so you let her have her way, keepin' the stove lifter on the third shelf an' rubbin' the mud off your boots an' a mess o' odds an' ends like that. An' Tyke's merry as a squirrel all day long. Yet the two o' 'em can't rest easy side by side half an hour. Lordy, I wish Tyke could see light on this livin' proposition! I'm beat at this way o' doin' it!"

He sighed, with rather a hopeless face, clicked to his horses, and rattled off down the one long street of Pettipaug.

In the lassitude following the storm of their return home, Richard and Tyke had set about their odd housekeeping in silent agreement. Richard slept in

the wide "kitchen chamber," his room since babyhood; Tyke, in the little jog over her pantry and stairs, from which she could answer his good-night whistle. The moment he was downstairs, the man hurried over to his wife to start her fire and fetch her water. The many early chores of a farmer done up, he went in to his mother's breakfast, but he ate his dinner and supper in his wife's house. There was a droll side to this pendulum day that touched his humor, for his mother set out for him each morning her best Sunday breakfast and his wife provided him with a fresh pie every day.

Of course, Pettipaug had seethed and bubbled at the spectacle of husky Rich Ladd pulled hitherty-yander between his two small womenfolks. Ancient gran'thers and grandams dug up out of their memories the story of his grandmother and grandfather, who had threatened so strange a fashion of living, but had been forced to yield their whimsies to the iron hand of fate, which had destroyed both their homes by fire; and an older story still—"When th' brig *President*, that whipped the Britisher *Little Belt*, was built right to this dock, sir. Yes, sir, right here!"—of his great-great-grandparents, who "swung a-tween her house an' hisn all the days o' their wedded life, week in, week out, reg'lar as Saturday come round in the almanac."

Richard had winced down deep in his pride of Pettipaugship at the questions and the laughter, and Ann Janette had wept her apron into a sop, but Tyke had laughed her undaunted lilt:

"They'll get another nine days' wonder, come to-morrow."

Her words proved comfortingly true. Next week young Cap'n Haskins eloped with the doctor's daughter, the very day after her banns to rich old Lawyer Vest had been read in meetin', and before Pettipaug had sifted down to the bottom of that, Adoniram Purple,

mourned as drowned for thirty years, and celebrated for his attributes as a husband and father on a monument in River View graveyard, turned up from the Australian gold coast. With such a rich season as that upon them, the villagers could spare but flying thoughts to the stately white house and the crooked little black one.

Neither Richard nor Tyke ever spoke to each other of their compromise, each waiting, perhaps, like a breathed wrestler, for second wind, or warily watching for the other to reach for the first hold in the new attack. And the widow, after the first flood of grief, suddenly dropped all mention of the situation. It was as if it would go on forever.

Richard got his grain, turned his horses homeward, and drove into the sunset. The summer had lingered far into October, still and soft and sweet, but last night the wind had roared around the house, and to-day the chill of coming winter bit in the air. Richard wondered unhappily how it would seem nights when rattling shutters and pouring waterspouts would drown out the sound of Tyke's good night, and when he would lie awake, wondering if her chimney had caught fire or her roof was leaking.

"Consarn women, anyhow!" he muttered furiously, and was glad to see a man on the road ahead whose company would change his thoughts.

"Ride?" he called, and gave the stranger the candid smile that made his good, homely face pleasant to see.

"Thank you! I'm glad of a lift." The stranger hoisted his bag and then himself up to the seat. He was about Richard's own age, handsome in a light, undecided way, and rather elegant of manner and bearing.

"You didn't fetch that great bag 'way over from the junction?" Richard asked.

The stranger laughed.



"Mother! Tyke!" Richard turned distractedly, first one way, then another. "Ain't there some way out that'll please all o' us?"

"I did. There wasn't a team, an' some one said it was only two miles to Pettipaug."

"That's Ep Mills, the station master. He'd rather do you an ill turn than eat."

Again the stranger laughed. Richard liked the sound of his laughter.

"Oh, it's turned out all right. Your road lie anywhere near the tavern?"

"I can make it. Ged up, Joe! Come 'long, Bob!" Then, with shy friendliness: "Tavern's mighty poor, comfortless place to abide in, they tell me."

The stranger grimaced.

"I'm afraid so, but I can't help myself. The directors told me it was my only place."

"You're the new cashier to the bank!" excitedly. The upheaval in the bank had been another hue and cry that had drawn Pettipaug off Richard's own trail.

The stranger nodded.

"My name's Ethelbert Tower—'Fell, I'm called."

"Well, Mr. Tower, I was on the other side o' the fence in the late war in Pettipaug," Richard told him, with his good candor, "but I've nothin' again' you, an' I wish you well in the town."

"Thank you. It looks like a pretty place. Kind o' rough tillage, though, ain't it?"

They talked on farming till Richard drove up to his own door.

"This my house," he said proudly, pointing with his whip at the sagging-roofed cottage, and forgetting that it was not his at all, but his wife's. "I want you should come in take supper with us, your first night to Pettipaug. My wife's got a good meal waitin'. I'm one o' the directors o' the bank."

Tyke came flying around the house, a griddle-cake turner in one hand and a stove lifter in the other.

"Dick Ladd, you're later'n—— Why, why, Fell Tower!" She swarmed up over the wheel.

"Watch out! You'll be ketched! Steady, boys, steady!"

The new cashier tumbled out and caught Tyke by the shoulders.

"Tyke! Tyke Kenton! What brings you here?"

"The will o' the Lord, I hope. Dick, this is my cousin—from 'way over Pleasant Valley way, where I lived when I was a child."

"We aren't just cousins, exactly," the stranger began, his arm around the girl's slender shoulder.

"Now, Fell, you goin' back on me like that?" Quick red flung out its flags in her cheeks.

"Her mother's brother married my mother when she was a widow with me, only a little chap. He was like my own father to me."

"An' we were raised together like brother an' sister, eh, Fell? Come right in, afore every last flapjack gets as hard as leather."

As Richard unharnessed his horses, he wondered why Tyke had never mentioned this cousin to him.

"Richie"—the kitchen door was flung open to let in a blast of wintry air, and the younger Ladd daughter, Marcia—"mother wants you right home. She's dreadful worried an' put about."

Richard looked up from the checkerboard at which he and Tyke were having their usual evening contest.

"Shut the door, sis. You'll freeze us," mildly. "What's got into mother?"

"Try some o' Rich's new cider an' my nut cakes," Tyke interposed hospitably.

"Brother Cephas's been over," Marcia told them, in jerks between the cider and doughnuts, "an' he's full of an awful story o' the doin's on the Bokum Road. Ol' Mr. Dwyer an' Mis' Aren-

thy was bound an' robbed an' lef' so all day."

"Forever! Who did it?"

"Tramps. Two've been hangin' round the junction for a week past, folks say."

"Likely they heard tell o' ol' Mr. Dwyer's great property, an' didn't know he keeps every cent o' it to the bank," surmised Tyke.

"Who found 'em, May?"

"The Buell boy, when he went for milk this mornin'. There, I got to go. Mother's like as not in the high strikes. She says she's got to have her son to protect her this minute."

Dick shoved away the checkerboard.

"Tyke, you come spend the night over to our house."

The girl bubbled over with laughter.

"Why, Dick Ladd, me that has got neighbors all round, thick as blueberries in the patch! Those poor old bodies lived more'n a mile away from the nearest house. No, indeed, I shan't come!"

Marcia's young eyes rounded in expectation of a scene between her brother and his wife. Richard's hand clenched on the edge of his coat.

"You lock your chamber door when you go to bed."

"It ain't got a lock to it." Tyke's eyes danced with fun.

"You push your chest o' drawers again' it, then, an' take the dinner gong upstairs with you. If you don't——"

"Don't shoot, Davy Crockett. I'll come down!" mocked the girl, running to get the great bell.

Richard bade her good night, more in wrath than in affection.

"I could shake you to pieces, like Shep does a rabbit"—his big hands swayed her to and fro—"yet I can't do a thing with you!" in helpless anger.

"Don't you get in a whew, dear. Nobody's goin' to bother this poor little old rackety house."

"Rich-ard Ladd!" Marcia's voice shrilled back on the wind.

He snatched at a kiss, and rushed off to his mother.

Tired out from a heavy day of cutting timber, Richard slept profoundly. Yet down in his dreams he seemed to hear an alien sound, harsh, insistent. He fought with inertia till he dragged himself up to consciousness. A bell was jangling above the clatter of the wind, and his dog was barking savagely. He leaped from his bed, thrust his gun, loaded still from duck shooting, out of the window, and fired it into the night; then, bolting into his clothes as he went, hurled himself downstairs and into the garden.

A light danced ahead of him, and an eager, cool voice called:

"Don't shoot, Dick!"

"My Lord, Tyke, you!"

The girl, wrapped in a long scarlet cloak, her hair whipped about her face, her eyes blazing, looked the spirit of the windy night, for an instant to mortal eyes incarnate.

"He ran," she gasped; "I rang, an' then I followed." The lamp in her hand flared, then went out.

"Who? Which way?" Richard grasped her with his free arm. She was safe; nothing else mattered much.

"I heard his step jar on the path by the kitchen door—that stone where it's broken, an' jiggles. I knew it was somebody. Shep heard it, too."

A light sputtered in Richard's kitchen. He saw his mother holding a light in the doorway.

"Richie?" Her thin voice outrode the wind. "What's happenin' out there?"

"You go back inside." He turned Tyke about to the house. "Nō, you ain't to stay here! Go!" He pushed her strongly toward the door.

"You wait till I get you a lantern," she called over her shoulder as she patterned into the house.

Without answering, Richard strode down toward his chicken house, fear for his new gamecocks in his mind. The chickens were all asleep, and the dim corners of the building showed no thicker shadows.

"Here!" Tyke was at his elbow, thrusting a lantern into his hand.

"You go back into that house or I'll —" He choked on the threat.

"Knock me down?" She laughed up impishly into his face. "Here's somebody, but I guess he ain't a robber."

"Evenin', Rich!" drawled a voice out of the bushes, and a big-bearded man brought his lantern alongside.

"Evenin', Cap'n Stovell. Kind o' late to be viewin' the country, ain't it?" Richard answered in his own vein.

"I heard your little ol' gun go off, an' lit out for mine, too. Shall we kind o' reconnoiter?"

Up and down the paths, through the bushes, and around the houses, they searched. The ground was powder dry and would hold no footprint.

"Cur'us," ruminated the captain. "No signs o' nobody. Yet your dog an' your wife heard 'em, sure?"

Richard swung his lantern low to something that glittered. It was a gold cuff link, caught on the twig of a bush by the kitchen door, as if some one had jerked himself free from the shrubbery that entangled his arms.

"See anythin'?"

"Nothin'." He dropped the link into his pocket.

"Well," yawned the neighbor, "that there yellow light means mornin'. I guess I'd better mog 'long home."

"Come in to breakfast, cap'n," Tyke's voice called sweetly from her own door. "I got the fire goin', an' the coffee's 'most boiled."

"Does sound kind o' temptin'." The captain, who was a bachelor, and notorious for shiftless housekeeping, laughed guiltily.

In the strange light of dawn, with-

out shadow or sunshine, the three ate the comfortable breakfast that Tyke cooked them. Then Richard shouldered ax and saw for the timber piece.

The sun was still up when he slung his tools for home, the thought of Tyke alone in the dusk of the little black house shortening his stint.

"Sho, now; mother an' the girls are right within holler. I'm growin' foolish," he told himself, as he made his way out of the woods.

He pondered the attacks upon the old people on the Bokum Road, and then the night prowler at his wife's house. Thieves were unknown to Pettipaug of that day; housekeepers left their doors open, or, at most, tucked the key under the mat; fruit and vegetables dried out on the fences, untouched.

"Must have been a city job," he ruminated. "Men that got wind o' ol' Dwyer's money. But they wouldn't want anythin' at Tyke's!"

He drew from his pocket the cuff link he had found, and stared at it twinkling in his palm. Richard was a slow-molded fellow. He took a long gait to reach a conclusion; but, once there, he stuck to it like a bulldog.

"I've seen Fell Tower wear the lick an' spit o' this more times than a few over to our house. Seems's if he had 'em on last time he came. He didn't lose 'em *then*." He shook his head over too big a puzzle.

As he turned into the lane leading up to the settlement that formed a wing of Pettipaug itself, he saw Ethelbert Tower just ahead of him. He could well have sung the old rhyme:

I do not love thee, Doctor Fell.
The reason why I cannot tell,
But this one thing I know full well,
I do not love thee, Doctor Fell.

A wish to avoid the dapper young cashier made him dodge back into the road. Then, with a muttered, "Tain't neighborly," he hailed him:

"Oh, Tower!"

The other stopped, with a smile.

"Hello, Dick!"

Richard winced. Tyke's name, alone!

"You've knocked off early, Dick," holding out his hand.

"It's always short hours for you, you lucky codger!" Richard gripped the rather girlish hand in his bear's paw.

"George, you've got a clutch!" Fell shook the crushed member. "I'm on my way up to beg a square meal from your wife. Think she's got any cold victuals for a tramp?"

"Tavern gettin' more'n you can chaw, eh?" He had invited the newcomer often to take a meal with them.

"It beats the Old Boy himself, there," with a shiver of disgust. "Grease an' dirt an' things fired on the table lickety whoop, an' my room not swept a month o' Sundays, nor clean sheets once a year."

Richard laughed at the other's face of loathing.

"Oh, it's a good enough joke to you. You're pampered up with the best o' cookin'—two women bakin' every day for you, an' your mother's house slick as a new pin. Wish I had even one such berth open to me!"

Richard ceased even to smile.

"You tried round for another place you can board you?"

"There ain't a place anywheres—except Miss Susan Pettus', on the Bokum Road, an' that's more'n four mile out. Say, Dick, that was a queer thing—the robbery out on that road!" By this time the two were jogging along together.

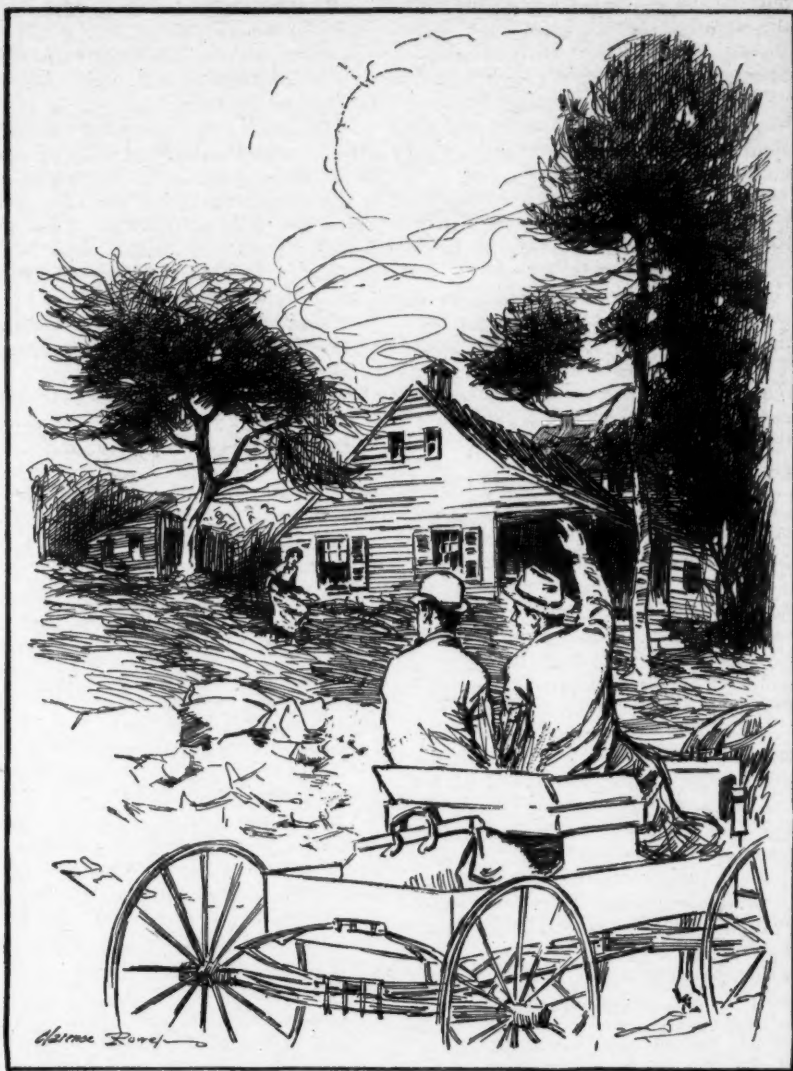
"It was so."

"Got any ideas on it?"

"No. I haven't seen a soul to-day to get the rights o' it."

"About nothin' else's talked of in the bank. Look here, ain't you shaky about leavin' Tyke all alone in that house?"

"Could throw a stone from my room into hers!"



Tyke came flying around the house, a griddle-cake turner in one hand and a stove lifter in the other.

"That's all right. But that ol' fellow
lives right here—cap'n——"
"Stovell."

"That's him—told me there was an
attempt on her house last night."
"Um—maybe. Tyke viewed it she

heard a prowler. We didn't find trace o' any one."

"Cap'n said your dog barked fit to bust, before ever she rung her bell."

Richard trudged on stolidly. Any reference to his dual housekeeping shut him up.

"Some man ought to be in there nights."

As Richard was certainly the man, he set his lips closer still. The two shouldered along in silence.

"Dick, old fellow, I got a proposition. I'm sick as a dog o' that tavern—you need a man in that house. What you say to me comin' to live with her?"

Richard tramped along as if he had not heard a word. His apathy appeared to alarm Fell, for he hurried on confusedly:

"It ain't as though I was a stranger. I'm her cousin, raised right along with her from the cradle, you might say. Folks couldn't talk, an' 'twould be only for the winter months, when the nights are longish."

They were at the gate now, and Richard held its latch while he looked the other up and down, as if he were taking stock of him for the first time. In the chill November dusk and beside Richard's own ruddy lustiness, Fell seemed a meager youth with a bleached cheek, yet he bore himself gracefully, had a handsome profile, and a certain steely glint in his light eyes.

"Well, sirs!" Richard's amazement could find no other vent. "Well, sirs!"

"Here, you Tyke, what you say?" Fell called to a flying shape in the garden.

"I say you'd better come warm you. It's a real fallish evenin'." She flung open the door into the kitchen, brimming with warmth and aromatic with the odors of spiced preserves.

"My, this is home!" Fell dropped into a rocker, with a long sigh; then, before the slow-going Richard could find his wits: "You want I should die

in that ol' rat trap o' a tavern, poisoned with the brews they mix up for me, or you want I should come live 'long o' you in this pleasant house, an' keep the bogies from carryin' you off?"

"Dick's protection enough for me—if I need any!" She flung up a defiant head as she rattled out the mixing bowl.

"Goin' to have hot biscuits for supper! My Lord, I ain't eat a biscuit since I lef' Pleasant Valley!"

Tyke poured in flour and milk with nimble hands, and began to measure soda and cream of tartar.

"Well, maybe you'll let me stay tonight, won't you, just to see how it is to be in a human bed again?"

All the time Richard had been following his own thoughts in a steady trudge in and out by this strange trail. The goal he reached was that no man on earth, much less his wife's cousin, should beg hospitality from him.

"Why, Fell," he began in his deep, kind voice, "you don't need to get in any whew over it. Tyke an' me'll deem it a favor an' a pleasure if you'll take up your abode with us for the winter, or till such time as you can find you a proper livin' place. You can have the forerom chamber, an' I guess we'll make you comfortable."

A flare of red dyed the girl's cheeks. She gave her husband a strange, swift look. Even Fell's cool fairness flushed slightly. He jumped up and clapped Richard on the shoulder, crying:

"You're a reg'lar square brick, ol' fellow, an' I shan't forget it, ever!"

Richard drew his hand out of his pocket, holding in it the gold cuff link.

"You know anythin'?"—he stopped; then he, too, reddened under his deep tan—" 'bout how the folks at the tavern'll take your quittin' 'em?" he ended, his hand thrust back into his pocket.

"Dick, if you're a-goin' to get that cotton cloth down to the store for me to make your new shirts, you'll have to be

seein' about it to-day, for next week you're lumberin', an' week after I got to tack my comfortable."

A certain tang crisped Tyke's speech. She had been flying around all day, baking and cleaning her house, while Richard had dozed placidly by the fire over the county paper.

"Kind o' rough day to hike downstreet," he muttered sleepily.

"Nonsense!" The tone was sharp now. "Snow stopped, sun out again, an' 'twas just a squall, anyhow. Do the horses good to get out." She twitched down his coat and cap and rummaged his mittens out of a drawer.

Richard laughed with a wry face.

"Say, Tyke, I'll finish this slickin'-up business if you'll drive downstreet."

His wife made no reply to this specious offer—he was a byword in the family for dundering ineptness in a house—but brought him his boots.

"Poor tale a man can't sit peacefully by his own fireside a day like this!" he grieved, as he heaved himself ponderously out of the rocker.

"Dick Ladd! You're enough to make a cow fly into inches! If the house was afire, you'd be just so moderate!"

The big man turned eyes of amusement upon the little creature fidgeting before him.

"Any great tew about gettin' back?" mildly.

"Back! I want to get you started!"

"Well, I'm off!" He pushed on his coat, and, cap in hand, stepped out into the snow.

"Dick! Dick Ladd! Your muffler!" She brandished a long gray scarf like a banner.

He stood below in the path, while from the top step she wound the muffler around him. It seemed to Richard her little elfish face looked more pointed than usual.

"You feelin' real peart, dear?" with great gentleness.

"Oh, my stars, yes!" impatiently.

"Don't you want I should take you with me? The air's dreadful kind o' pleasant after that stived-up house."

"No, I *don't!*" violently. Then more gently: "I got to finish dustin' the fore-room an' settin' it to rights."

He walked away, without more words. Ten minutes later, as he drove, jingling, out of the yard, he saw through the window Tyke tying a gingham apron around the waist of Fell Tower and thrusting a duster into his hand.

"Tower's come in early this afternoon," he thought. "He's as good as a servant girl, helpin' Tyke round the house." His eyes clouded with a gloom strange to their clear candor.

The snow lay smooth and hard on the road; the air, in spite of the storm just over, breathed a faint, sweet hope of spring; the sky was a tremulous blue veiled in cloud wreaths; the sleigh ran along as if to music. Richard, sensitive as a poet to all the lovelinesses of the round world, to-day marked none of them. He was dispirited, anxious, but over what he could not say—the most depressing of all moods. Reason told him his winter was prosperous, his spring full of hope, yet fancy twisted in and out of the queer, three-cornered life going on under the crooked old roof of his home.

"Tower's a sound fellow," he told himself defiantly. "Kind o' a sissy in some o' his ways, but all right at the core." He steadied his hard-trotting horses. "Tyke's just kind o' peaked from livin' in the house, same as a plant. It's been a tejus winter."

As he came out of the store, he saw his brother-in-law, Cephas, starting toward his farm down by the bay.

"Hi, there, Ceph," he called, "want I should carry you over home?"

"I 'low I just do." The ruddy twinkling old man pulled himself and his bundles into the sleigh. "Colt's lame and the boys took Molly to be shod, so

I had to fall back on shank's mare. Slightly day after the storm, ain't it?"

"Dreadful pretty," absently; then, rousing himself, "How's sis?"

"Usual health, thank you. Look here, Richie, I drew the prize o' your family when I took her, not even countin' you out."

"Ho, me! Sister's a beautiful woman, an' I'm pleased you appreciate her."

"Always did. I warn't guarden to you young uns for nothin'! Selina's had a noble raisin'. She's got a good mother."

"Yes, sir!"

"Curious, ain't it, your wife can't make out to live comfortable with her? Is it somethin' mother did to her by-gone times, or just a kind o' whimsy o' hers?"

Richard stirred his feet in the straw uneasily.

"She says she wouldn't live with her *own* mother if she had one."

"Rich, your wife's pretty young, an' she looks like a child in tiers. She's mighty sweet-faced, too, for all she's got that gypsy color."

The young man turned a strong, steady look upon the old one.

"What you got in your mind, Cephas?" very quietly.

"Now, don't you carry on, son!" The advice seemed ludicrous in the face of that calm. "You know what Pettipaug is for talk."

"We been livin'—the way we do—nigh a year, now. I deem they ought to be wanted to it by now."

"But that Tower ain't been with you all the time."

"You mean?"

"Oh, nothin', nothin'! You know Pettipaug."

"I know *you*. Out with it!"

The old man looked at the young one with bright, intent eyes.

"Can't tell how far a frog'll hop by lookin' at him," he thought; then, aloud, very kindly: "You don't believe it,

son, nor I don't, either, but she's young, no more'n a girl, an' she's pleased with herself, same as all pretty-faced, likely girls, an' she's neglected by her husband, in a manner o' speakin', an' that Tower—well, let's call him smooth."

"My wife is a good woman." Even as he said it, something seemed to touch his heart like an icy finger.

"Richie"—the other laid a heavy hand on his comrade's knee—"take your wife home to your mother."

"She won't—don't want to go."

"Don't you pay any heed to her wants or no wants. *Take* her! Your mother's been one o' the very best o' mothers to you. I helped a dight with your raisin', so I know. It ain't proper respect to her to let yourself be an object o' talk in the township. You're her only son, an' it ain't right feelin' to her, settin' by you so uncommon strong as she does, for you to move to your wife's house out o' your own."

"It ain't mine; it's mother's."

"Hers, then. I'd rather a sight be beholden to my mother for a roof than to my wife."

Richard stared out across the clear pure fields in dumb pain. Cephas respected his mood, and they drove in the deep silence of the country in winter, into which the chime of their bells cut sweetly. At last Richard said heavily:

"I'll do my best to change things."

Immediately, Cephas began to talk of other, cheerful matters.

Richard's sister Selina came out into the snow to greet him, a tall strong woman, with a plain sweet face, the most like her brother in body and spirit of all the family.

"Do 'light, sonny. It's weeks since I've had a dish o' chat with you, an' the children are all over to Turkey Hill, slidin'."

So Richard sat by her fire, eating a wedge of apple pie—and telling her the

family news. Cephas was out in the barn on some urgent occasion.

"Sonny boy," she said, in a warm pause in the talk, "I got somethin' on my mind to say to you."

"Oh, Lordy!" muttered her brother, but he squared his shoulders to it.

"You ain't treatin' Tyke right, livin' like you do."

"Good George, sis, she won't live with mother! We've talked like a mill race over it!"

"Nor I wouldn't, either," Selina retorted with spirit, "an' you hadn't ought to ask her. I don't yield place to any woman in my affections for my mother, an' I honor her, too. She was a self-sacrificin' mother to you an' me an' the girls. She kep' you at school long after other boys had to turn out to work, an' no matter how worn out her own clothes were, she always dressed us girls up pretty for any frolics that we were invited to. An' she did it by savin' an' workin' an' denyin' herself everythin'!"

"I know that. I shan't ever forget it, either."

"Nor me. But, Richie, mother's powerful hard to live with. I tried it for twenty-five year, 'fore I wedded Cephas, an' I ain't speakin' 'bout anythin' I don't know. She's got ways an' she's got notions an' she's got whimsies an'——"

"All women have."

"They haven't! Not like *hers*, anyhow. Richard Ladd, she argued a full week, steady, every hour o' the day, to have me put my bureau in the corner o' the chamber she deemed was prettiest, though 'twas so dark there I couldn't tell whether I was free, white, an' twenty-one, or a blackamoor from Guinea. An' in the end o' it, she cried so I hauled the ol' bureau, glass an' all, into the corner. An' that's just one time. She's got her idea, set as iron an' deeper'n a well, 'bout every livin'

thing you see an' feel an' taste an' hear in her house."

"It's her house."

"That's it! You go live in your own!"

"That ain't mine. It's Tyke's," heavily.

"Fiddle-de-dee! What's your wife's yours. Husband an' wife are one. I guess I see myself drawin' lines round anythin' o' *mine* to keep Cephas out!"

"She don't draw lines. It's just my way o' speakin'. Selina, what's set you off on this turang to-day?"

"That Tower. I tell you, it ain't conduct in a husband to leave his wife to be looked out for, as you might say, by another man, an' him young an' well favored an'——"

"Do you mean that Tyke——"

"Set in your chair, sonny. I don't mean anythin'—except it's no way for man an' wife to live. You sprunt right up to mother to-night, an' tell her you're goin' to live in the house with your wife, same as any other married man."

"If I do, it'll break mother's heart!"

"If you don't, it'll break somethin' else!"

Richard got up to pace the room in long strides.

"Cephas says for me to make her go home to mother."

"Cephas's a man! I say make yourself pull up an' go to her!"

He turned on her like a badgered animal.

"I'd like to go off somewheres by myself an' leave 'em both!"

"Do!" Selina agreed heartily. "Get you a house o' your own, an' make 'em both come live with you."

Richard drove home through the peculiar white twilight of a snowy night in a daze of trouble. It was plain what both Cephas and Selina feared—the "somethin' else" capable of ruin was his home. He set his jaw hard. He trusted Tyke as he did his own honor, yet—his shoulders sagged forward—an

ugly hint stirred in him ominously every time he met Tower, try as he might to scotch it. He had never seen him wear the cuff links since the day before that night alarm. Monstrous thought! The act of a miscreant! He knew the outward favor of such a man, never the pretty features and womanish grace of a fellow like Tower.

His thoughts swung around to the crux of the case, the way he lived.

"One foot on sea
An' one on land,"

he groaned to himself.

It was ridiculous! That's what it all boiled down to. Should he pick up Tyke and thump her down in his mother's house? Should he wrench himself loose from his mother's clasp to live in his wife's house?



The girl, wrapped in a long scarlet cloak, her hair whipped about her face, her eyes blazing, looked the spirit of the windy night.

He had never in all his life pitted his will against another's; his sisters had always yielded to him, his mother had always ruled him. He worked the farm on shares for her, he left the ultimate traffic with outsiders to her. She was keen as a sword in business. He trembled like a recruit at his first battle, ignorant if he be a coward or not.

"I'm just a big baby," he told himself suddenly, shifting his powerful body in the sleigh.

"That there field"—his eyes on the meadow by the road—"I grubbed the rocks out of it with a stone plow, an' hefted 'em all myself into the stone boat, an' drove 'em over for the barn in two days less time than any man

would wager. 'Twas the talk o' the town. But I can't—"

He sighed woefully, meaning he could not bend the will of one blue-eyed, pink-cheeked old lady, or of one laughing-lipped, curly-haired young girl.

His sore spirit labored among the windings of the situation. His mother's house? Tyke's house? Either way, he

must ask shelter of a woman. He could not offer a roof to either of them. Tyke, with her crooked bent old cottage, was in far more dignified case than he.

"I wish to the Lord I had a spot I could call my own! I'd go there and live by myself. Then they'd have to come live with me, both o' 'em!"

Stung by the splendor of this sudden thought, he drove smartly into the village. He stopped at the post office for his mail; a formal act, usually, as the family rarely had a letter. To-night was an exception. He opened the envelope, addressed in a strange hand, from a distant State, wonderingly. The letter was from the lawyer who, some years before, had settled the estate of his mother's uncle, whose will had left her a—Pettipaug—fortune. The letter was brief:

MR. RICHARD LADD, *Pettipaug.*

DEAR SIR: As you are aware by the provisions of the will of the late Mr. Daniel Somerville, uncle to your mother, Mrs. Ann Janette Ladd, you are heir to the sum of four thousand dollars (\$4,000) upon the death, without issue, of the nephew of the late Mr. Daniel Somerville. Such death having occurred the eighth of January last, I hereby inclose my check, as executor of the estate, for the sum of four thousand dollars (\$4,000). Believe me, sir, your obedient servant,

THOMAS MINER,
Att'y-at-law.

The address in the Western town where this uncle, long estranged from this family, had lived, was added.

Richard turned the check around in his fingers wonderingly. A mighty sum of money—and all his own! Suddenly he felt more self-respect, more manhood. He could not tell how this thin strip of blue paper could help him in his trouble, yet somehow it steadied his courage.

Outside, a lank old countryman, who might have stood for Uncle Sam in a cartoon, hailed him.

"Say, Rich, you want to do me a

good turn?" Every one trusted Richard's kindness.

"Carry you up to the Heights? Certain!"

"That's a good boy. I got 'most a load here." He was weighed down with flour sack, bags, and bundles.

"Saturday tradin', eh?" Richard drew the buffalo robe up around the old man. "Any offer for the house yet?"

The young man asked this as a form of pleasantry much enjoyed by Uncle Sala Downs, not from any expectation of news. Long before Richard had been born, a family from the city, by the name of Jefferies, had bought a large tract of land on a hill back of Pettipaug, had built a caravansary of a house, had christened it, in scorn of Pettipaug's simple traditions, "The Heights," and had proceeded to live on this vast domain after a fashion marvelous and appalling to the village. At the end of a year, the owners had all vanished as mysteriously as they had come, and now, for half a century, the house had been empty save for this one old man, gardener to the estate in its little day, who lived in two rooms.

"Better buy the place, Richard," he chuckled, as they drove along. "Mr. Augustus Jefferies, he says he'll let it go for next to nothin'."

"He the only one left o' the fam'ly?"

"Only one as I know."

"How much he want?"

"He'd take eighteen hundred dollars. Noble house still; thirty acres o' land lyin' right 'longside o' your mowin'. Think it over, boy."

The old fellow had lived so many years among the cobwebs of grandeur he conceived himself one of the fallen family.

Richard twisted the letter in his pocket, while the wildest idea danced about within his brain. Like all gentle natures trained in a steady path of daily duty, once he swung out, he would

swing free and far. Here was a strange solution to his grievance, an answer monstrous, unthinkable. Here a house of his own, in which he could intrench himself until his enemies both sought him with flags of truce.

"Mother can't fling it up to me I'm desertin' her for Tyke, nor Tyke say she'll have to take second place in another woman's house. I'll do it, I'll be——" He shut off the oath short. This was too solemn a time for any vain modes of speech. His voice was more than commonly quiet and deep as he said sedately:

"I guess I will buy that house."

The other laughed.

"Nail down yer trade to-night, will ye?" taking part in the jest.

"I'll sleep there to-night, if you can stow me away some place."

Now, indeed, the old man peered at him nervously in the dusk.

"Say, Rich, ye're foolin'!"

"Never was more in earnest. I want the land, I want the house, an' I got the money right here in my wallet."

"But what you mean 'bout movin' in to-night?"

"What I say," doggedly. He turned his horses up the lane to the Heights, a road lost, in summer, under weeds and brambles. "Don't you ask questions—that's a good fellow—but get me a light, so I can write a letter to my wife an' my mother. Then you take my horses home an' bring back the things they give you."

Like many bachelors living alone, the old caretaker was as tidy as a woman; his lighted lamp showed a swept and garnished kitchen and a spotless bed in the little room beyond. With the calmness with which one accomplishes the grotesque nonsense of a dream, Richard wrote two letters exactly alike, varying only in the address:

DEAR TYKE (DEAR MOTHER): I can't make either one of you miserable, pulling you out

of the home you have chosen to live in, and I can't stand the hectoring life I live between you. Therefore, I have bought a house of my own, the Heights. I don't know how long I will live here, nor what is going to come of all this, but here I am. I will come see you both to-morrow, but not to any meals. Please send by bearer the things in the right-hand side of my press and in the top part of my chest.

When the old man was gone, he took the lamp and went all over the house. Most of the tall rooms were empty, but enough heavy old furniture, too cumbersome to share in the family's flight, was left to set him out sparsely. He decided to have the room next to the old man's cleaned for a bedroom, as less lonesome in that echoing hostelry, and the one beyond for a kitchen. The idea of his own cooking creased his face in a sardonic grin. Perhaps Sala would get meals for him when he got his own.

By the time he had explored every corner, he heard Sala thumping up the path. The old man's eyes twinkled with excitement; he set his bundle on the table with a dramatic flourish.

"You got my things?" Richard yearned to know how his family had taken this mad exploit, yet feared to hear.

"I give your missive to your wife, first," old Sala began, with relish. No such squalls had stirred the pool of his hermit existence since the great family had been swept out of it. "She was a-settin' playin' checkers with that pretty boy from the bank."

Richard winced.

"Her cousin. Well?"

"She turned as red as that fire in my stove, jumped up kind o' wildlike, an' run right over to your ma's, without so much as a bonnet on her head. I clipped it after her, an' the boy, he come, too. I shoved your other letter into your ma's hands. She got right up, too, an' she says, very softlike, yet all of a tremble:

"'I'm a-goin' right off to my poor boy. He's sick, or he'd never do this.'

"Then your wife she dove right for her. My, she's sly!"

"'No, you ain't, neither! He's been plagued enough by us two miserable women! He shall be let alone now.' She says to me, kind o' smilin', though her eyes were blazin' with a queerish light, 'You tell my husband we both hope he'll pass a good night.'"

Richard picked up the packet dumbly. Like the body, after a tremendous exertion, his spirit was exhausted. He felt a desire for food and sleep, nothing more. He nodded when the old man chirped briskly:

"Feel you could relish some o' my batter cakes with maple sirup onto 'em?"

He sat by the stove, in an apathy, while his host laid the table with meticulous care, hunted out from his stores a seed cake and Ceylon tea, and browned the flapjacks to an entrancing umber.

"Set by, Rich. Set by, an' take off," he urged, in country formula.

Still in his daze, the young man ate—the meal of a giant—while old Sala fussed over him like a grandmother.

"You let me help 'bout the clearin' up." Richard meant to do his duty.

"Land o' Goshen, no!" The old man spread his arms protectingly over his cups and plates. "That pink-sprigged chiny was part o' my mother's weddin' outfit. There ain't a piece been so much as nicked. You go right in, sleep in my bed, Rich. I'll make me a shake-down on the sofy, here. I've done it more times than a few, cold nights, so as to keep a watch onto the fire."

Richard took the candle the other held out with a smile, quizzical, yet kindly.

"It's a queer ol' world, Richard, my boy, an' sometimes kind o' a sad one."

The young man, remembering some

half-heard tale of his mother's of how his host, when a lad, had been jilted by his sweetheart on the eve of his wedding, put his hand into the other's, and, smiling, too, bade him good night. Once in bed, he fell asleep immediately, with not one thought of Fell or Tyke, and slept without dreams glad or sorrowful.

Dawn was putting out the stars, with long, palely glowing fingers reached out from the east, when Richard awoke with a jerk. He stared about the unfamiliar room, and out of the window at the unfamiliar stretch of orchard, white beneath the snow. He had to shake his thoughts together before he could fix himself in his setting.

"I got to cut for home to get Tyke's fire a-goin'. Tower won't know 'nough to split a shingle, if I haven't left kindlin's."

He pulled on his clothes and hurried out into the glimmering day. Not a sound broke the winter silence; the light was that unearthly pallor that is neither night nor morning, a no-man's land in time. No smoke curled from the farm chimneys; no raised blind showed a homely day beginning. He seemed to himself to be walking in a land of dreams, himself a dream. How had he, Richard Ladd, a well-conducted citizen of Pettipaug, come into this fantastic position? In June he had wedded, with high hopes, a girl he loved. The next spring's buds were not yet out of their sheaths, and here was he an outcast from his home and from her.

At the picture of Tyke, red-lipped, star-eyed, eager-footed, he cringed all over his big body. Was he an outcast from her in a wider sense than the few acres between them? Was all the rank growth of talk about her and Tower in Pettipaug just a Jonah's gourd of the village's fostering, or did it sink its roots down into the dark earth of hideous fact? He swung himself around toward his new dwelling, then pushed

himself on toward the wall of his old garden.

He could not see Tyke's room or the kitchen from the well, into which he cautiously let down the creaking chain; the rest of the house was dead asleep. No sooner had the bucket splashed through the ice into the black pool below than the door snapped open, and Tyke flew out straight to him.

"Mornin', Dick!" A sweet flutter of sound. "You're here before time, ain't you?"

She clapped him on the shoulder like a friendly boy. Dick raised his head slowly to gaze at her. He thought, though that might have been imagination, that she was a little pale-lipped, and shadowy under the eyes, but the eyes themselves danced with their wonted elfin fire; and her smile was glowing.

"How's mother?" He made no effort to touch her.

"Oh, she took on some last night, but that's all over. I guess she's asleep still."

"You want I should start your fire?"

"I got it goin' myself. You bring in those pails an' an armful o' cord-wood, an' I'll be complete."

It occurred to Richard, as he stacked the wood, that she had no clew to his conduct; she could not know of his conversation with Cephas and Selina, nor of his inheritance. Why didn't she say something? But Tyke only thanked him lightly, and began to pat fish cakes for breakfast.

He went on dumbly to his mother. The house was still; so, after a custom of the family, he raised the entry window by a shaky catch and dropped himself inside. In a moment he was on his knees by the stove.

"Oh, Richie, *Richie!*" On this crescendo his mother was borne across the room and to a stooping clasp of her son.

Richard caught her in an awkward

embrace, huddled as he was on his knees.

"Good mornin', mother!" He had wished that Tyke would show some feeling; he feared his mother would.

Ann Janette gulped and swallowed.

"You're up early, ain't you, sonny?" tremulously.

"I guess not much," gruffly. "I got to find more kindlin'."

"Richie, darlin', I want to say—to say——"

"Now, mother, *don't!*"

"Whatever—it means—it's all right."

She dabbed gently at her eyes with her apron. "You willin' I should put up a dight o' provisions for you to take back with you to that place?"

Richard stared. When had he ever known his mother surrender a chance for lamentations and tears?

That day Richard worked like a driven slave on his new land, burning up brushwood, cleaning out fence corners, marking trees for cutting. He had written Augustus Jefferies to offer himself as a purchaser, but in his own sense of things the land was already his. He tried not to think of his mother or of Tyke at all, and he did not go near them all day.

"Tower can stir his sticks for 'em," he said, as he crashed a pile of rotted logs into his bonfire.

The next day was Sunday. With a sense of sin heavy upon him, Richard dozed by the fire over a book of travels found in the house, opposite Sala, who studied out with moving lips the deep things of some occult sect to which he gave allegiance. In the afternoon, fearing an onset from his married sisters and their husbands, he started to climb Lone Tree Hill.

Up this crag-girt height he climbed, through the light snow, at a steady trudge that ate up the miles and left him no strength for any thought but how to keep his lungs pumping. He

banished his mother and the tears he knew she must be shedding out of memory, and he strove to exorcise the image of Tyke that danced before like a will-o'-the-wisp. Yet flashes of fire bit him as he plodded on; had there been tender passages between his wife and Tower before she came to Pettipaug? He struck at a bush in his path, and climbed more stalwartly. Had she really prized Tower more than she did him, and wedded him only because of loneliness and chagrin? He kicked a stone savagely downhill. Had she once cared for him truly, dull plodder though he was, but been drawn away by this older claim? He leaped a little brook with a dash. He drove the swarm of tormenting questions from him with dogged resolution, and raced for the summit.

Drenched in sweat, his legs trembling, his breath sobbing in his throat, he flung himself down in the lee of a great rock, where the winter sun made a dry warm spot; and panted himself quiet. Then he sat up and looked down on the valley spread before him like a map.

"'An' exceedin' high mountain,'" he murmured, "'an' all the kingdoms o' the world'"—he finished the story wonderingly—"if thou wilt fall down an' worship me.'" Did some mighty temp-



Richard tore loose from the tree and began to climb down the sheer face of the cliff with marvelous speed and steadiness.

tation lurk here for him, too, humble wayfarer in the uphill wood of life?

Then the sheer beauty of meadow and lane and blue ice-marged river caught him. He looked long across the open country to the north, then let his vision swing to the cup of valley into which were clustered the red chimneys and tall white church spire of the village. The atmosphere was clear as glass, the air like liquid diamonds. Every object in the world below stood out with a sort of unnatural boldness.

He focused upon the Heights, the great bare house and dismantled barns.

"Looks like a town hall," he muttered.

Next, his eyes followed the fallow land to his own fields, to his mother's pleasant wide dwelling, and then to the aged cottage beside it, looking in the distance as if hung to it as an unsightly tag to some fair garment.

"It's—it's ridiculous," he muttered again. "I'm up there in that camp-meetin' tabernacle, an' mother in her good house, an' Tyke in that bumble-bee's nest, all because we haven't sense enough to find a way out."

He saw the span of buckskins lately bought from the West by his brother-in-law, Hallett Chapin, drive into his mother's dooryard.

"Lord, Lett will rare up high over this turnout!" he groaned. "He's the stiffest fellow for havin' everythin' accordin' to proper conduct, an' not givin' folks a handle to talk you over, ever I met up with. I can hear Polly tryin' to ca'm him down, tellin' him queer livin's in the blood, an' Lett growin' madder an' madder all the time."

He sprang to his feet, unable to sit still longer, then stopped, smitten into quiet. Out of the little dark house came two figures, known to him instantly—Tyke by her broad red scarf, Tower by his quick graceful movements. They walked swiftly down the lane, followed the main road to the fork, then turned into the way that led along the base of the hill from which he was watching them.

Richard hastened out to the very edge of the cliff, from whose sheer height he could command the road below directly. Quiet as some wild animal, he watched for their coming. Soon their pace brought them into sight, talking deeply together. They halted squarely beneath him, so that every motion was plain to him; even a word here and there was audible in the winter stillness.

Richard looked and listened, with every nerve taut, forgetful of honor or

shame, sensing only the peril to the core of his life. For, as his hungry eyes devoured Tyke—her lissome grace, her touching youth, her warm sweetness—love flooded him in a tide. His arms ached to hold her, while he whispered to her that he would live anywhere with her, even a thousand miles from Pettipaug. And now, just as he tasted upon his lips the perfume of this cup of love, it was to be dashed from his lips forever.

Tower's light distinct accents reached him:

"Of course I was that burglar—to scare him. I figured he'd be anxious you should have a man to look out for you, an' wouldn't have grit enough to——" The rest was lost.

Tyke's softer voice did not get to him.

"Maybe you didn't know it when you sounded your bell, but you'd guessed it by the time——" Again the voice sank.

Richard's fingers clutched the sleeve link he always carried in his pocket. So that was how!

Suddenly Tyke's voice rose in passion:

"He does prize me! Don't you tell me different! But he's bound under the will o' that mother o' his!"

"So he don't dare call his soul his own?"

"He's broken free from her——"

"An' from you, too, ain't he? It don't look, Tyke, as though he set such a powerful store by you—movin' off to live in solitary grandeur."

Richard could not catch her answer.

"You listen to me!" Again every word the man said beat up to him: "He's left you without cause—that's desertion in law. You come to me—I'm not the man to use you like that!"

Richard staggered to his feet, his arms flung around a tree, his body hanging over the edge of the cliff. The road was a lonely one, even in summer; few persons sought it. Now, he

and the man and woman in it seemed the only living creatures in a dead world. Tyke and Fell fronted each other, she with her back to the cliff, so her face was hidden, her hands limp at her sides, her head drooped forward; he with outstretched arms, and face flaming with passion. Suddenly he leaped forward and caught the girl in his arms and kissed her.

Richard tore loose from the tree and began to climb down the sheer face of the cliff with marvelous speed and steadiness. It mattered nothing to him that this was a trail never used since the days of the last Indian, a century ago. He was going to kill the man down there, and, until he did, his life was under a charm.

At the sound of crackling branches, the two below looked up. Fell uttered a shrill sound. Tyke's white lips gave out no cry. Both waited, still as stones. With one tremendous plunge, Richard was in the road beside them.

At that instant, around the curve swung Hallett Chapin, behind his glossy buckskins. He pulled up short beside the group.

"Afternoon, Rich. Afternoon, all. I drove over—to"—he stumbled over the name of the Heights, so scandalous did his brother-in-law's conduct in living there seem—"to see you. Downs guessed you'd gone in this direction, so I drove over, so as I could catch you up."

Hallett was a tall, solemn young man, who was said by his law kin, restive under his too-active interest, to have missed his vocation as a minister, or "some other interferin' trade," as Cephas expressed it.

"Jump in, Richard." He held in his pulling horses.

Richard turned on the others masterfully.

"Get in, you two!"

They climbed in without a word, and the strangely assorted company started

back home. Hallett talked with smooth fluency of small family matters. Tyke, with a woman's command of herself "before company," helped him along. Richard and Fell never spoke.

At the lane, Fell said hurriedly:

"If you'll let me out here, Mr. Chapin, I'll go see the judge a while. He's down with a cold." The judge was the president of the bank.

Hallett and Tyke bade him good-by, the latter in her usual tones. Richard stared after him until the fair girlish face and slender figure burned in his brain, as if branded upon its aching surface. He could not look at Tyke. Every sound of her voice went through him with a jar. She climbed out at her own door, and, still playing to her audience of one, called gayly:

"Thank you for the ride, Lett. Good-by, Dick."

Richard, too, was climbing out.

"I'm goin' to my house 'cross lots," he said heavily.

"I'll carry you over, Rich. I want to have a kind o' discourse with you; a plain one, seein' I have all a brother's feelin's toward you, same as if we were blood kin."

Richard looked up at the narrow lips and cold blue eyes of this "blood kin" with somber resolution. In his dealings with his family he had always been gentle and kind; now, his nature was like iron to them all. It cost him no pang to say sternly:

"No, Lett, I ain't a-goin' to talk, an' I ain't a-goin' to listen, now nor never! I know what I've done, an' I'll abide the consequences. That ends it." He was gone without a look, striding across the fields to his new home.

Out of sight of his brother-in-law, he swerved toward the village. He meant to overtake Fell by a short cut. The man he trailed must have gone faster than he counted, however, for he saw him enter the judge's house on the other side of the village.

Patient as fate, Richard waited in the clump of trees behind the house till Fell should come out again. His brain felt as empty of all sensations as if he had just waked from a long sleep. Just one big simple purpose throbbed and beat steadily, passionlessly, in all the dim channels of his body—to kill Fell. After that he had no plan. All his life he had been a sunny-natured giant, in small ways imposed upon by other boys because he had been too good-tempered to resent it, and ruled by his little tyrant of a mother. Now, at this one shattering blow upon his love and his honor, he had leaped into action, a Titan set upon a ruin.

In so brief a time that the call seemed a blind to throw him off, Fell came out, and started, not for home, but toward the river. He passed so close to the trees hiding his implacable enemy that the creak of his boots in the rutted road sounded to him. A neighbor passed him just here, and called out, in the friendly fashion all Pettipaug used to the popular stranger:

"Goin' fishin', Fell?"

"No. I'm just takin' a little walk."

Dogged as an Indian, Richard trailed him back to the tavern, and watched him let himself in by a side door, on his way up to the room once his on the third floor, where his delicate handsome profile appeared for an instant at the window. Should he follow him, and now, while his rage seethed hot in him, murder him? Some strands of prudence or self-restraint held him. He walked heavily away.

As he moved off, the front door of the tavern opened, and the tavern keeper and his wife stepped out, locking the door carefully behind them. They greeted Richard with the liking they felt for the young farmer, and the woman said:

"Sam an' me, we're off on a little trip over to my sister's for the night, down by the bay. There ain't a soul, steady

or transient, left in the place, so we've just locked up an' cut." She laughed like a child on a holiday.

Richard realized that they had not heard Fell enter the house, and supposed him over at Tyke's. Still he went on, without haste, yet in a kind of a lope that carried him well along. He did not heed his path; all roads were alike to him now, since all, in the end, would bring him to his object. His mind went over the events of his life since the strange man from Pleasant Valley had entered the village, till it ached with the dreary round. His fingers twisted incessantly the cuff link in his pocket.

Dusk found him at a lonely settlement of a few farms, called once, in hope unfulfilled, New City. A cousin lived there, and with him Richard took his supper, eating heartily, and talking calmly of village news, while all the time, underneath his serenity, ran the dark current of murder.

Nine o'clock tolled from the church clock as he crossed the meadows into Pettipaug. The night was still, and very dark, save for the reflection from the snow. Most of the lights of the houses were out; the villagers went early to bed Sunday night, in anticipation of a hard-working Monday. As he reached the tavern, he saw the shade in Fell's room rise, and Fell himself, ready for bed, stand clear in the lamp-light. Then his light, too, was out.

"He ain't gone back to her. He's got that much shame."

Already he had walked miles, yet with unwearied strength he turned back across the meadows again.

"Not yet," he muttered, although why he waited he could not have said.

An hour more along the river, and he was in the street once again. In spite of the mild air, he shivered constantly and his teeth clicked together; yet his purpose held steady.

As he rounded the bend that hid the

tavern from the rest of the village, he was aware of a curious glow in the sky, and as he approached the building he scented an acrid odor of burning. For a second he roused out of himself and his deadly preoccupation.

"Ol' rattletrap o' a tavern's afire, I'll vow! I always said it would burn up some day!"

Even as he spoke, the roof broke out into flames that shot far up into the sky. Slow to speak and act, he stood in amazement before the ever-cruel sight of a burning house; then his brain leaped to action.

"The church bell! I know where the key's kept!"

Swift as the leap of the flames, another thought stung him. His avenger! He need never stir a finger; his presence need never be known. Rather, he could—slowly—raise the village, and obtain the praise of having given the alarm—after the man inside was dead. He studied the building, hands in pockets, although he knew it well, for in a slack farming season he had helped the carpenters repair it.

The fire had broken out directly in the middle of the house, around the big center chimney. Both staircases were in the right wing. Fell slept in the left. Moreover, his part of the house rose sheer from the ground above a bricked courtyard—a fatal leap for a man.

Fate—or God—had delivered this man, hot from his sin, to a punishment more terrible than any Richard could ever have devised. The end had come. Richard licked his lips. All the blood in his body had turned to ice and settled in a great lump in his heart. He watched the glare of the fire spread till it lighted the blank windows each side of the chimney and showed Fell's room, and Fell himself in bed.

In the minute—the eternity—Richard watched, the heat reached Fell. He leaped from his bed, flung open his door, saw the crater of fire beyond it,

slammed to the door, rushed to the window, leaned far out, and shouted, in a voice the crackling fire rendered a puny shriek:

"Fire! Fire! Help!"

Richard was rooted to the spot in an agony as fierce as if he were gripped in the flames, for the manhood in him was coming to birth. No pity, no revulsion of feeling, no grip of conscience, wrung him for the shallow trickster who had betrayed his faith and ruined his home. He would never forgive him, but he would save him because he was his enemy and could claim nothing from him. He, Richard Ladd, would die, if needs must, for this man he hated.

"Comin', Fell!" he shouted back. "Stick to that window!" And he rushed for the house.

He dashed in a window with his shoulder, thundered upstairs and out on the roof, and along it to the burning wall that reared itself between him and the imprisoned man. If he could get through that, and haul Fell up on the roof, the rest would be simple, for at the back of the wing, at the corner farthest from the fire, he remembered an iron lightning rod nailed to the chimney and down the house to the ground. Fell could not reach this from his room because that was without doors into any other part of the building except the one that led into the hall, now a roaring furnace of flames.

Richard saw that the edge of the roof was not yet licked by the flames. It was a slender thread of plank, over which smoke and red-hot ashes drifted continually. Straight below it, three stories down, lay the bricked court. A path giddy and perilous.

He clenched his teeth, and took it at a run.

Instantly he was flat on his chest, leaning out over the edge of the roof, just above Fell's window.

"Reach up your arms!" His voice



He seized Fell, swung him back and forth slowly, faster, faster, up, up with a heave that wrenched every bone in its socket.

was quiet and steady. "I'll help you up."

"I can't climb," panted the other. "There's no shutter—nor moldin'. It's all blank wall."

Already his gay and impudent young face was stricken old and haggard with the shadow of the grave; his wide, strained eyes were dark with an agony

ached. He set Fell back on the window ledge.

All the time the fire surged to them in waves of heat that sucked the pith out of his muscles.

Fell's face, a strange glaring white in the fire glow, looked right up into his.

"No! Go back!" he whispered, his

of appeal, like a hurt dog's to his master.

"I'll haul you up, then." Richard stretched his legs out behind him till they found an iron chimney pipe jutting up a few feet from the roof. Around it he twisted them for a hold. Then he flung his arms over the side of the tavern.

"Climb out on the ledge an' ketch hold! Grip, now!"

A clutch, then a strain that stretched the muscles of his arms like strings. Fell rose, hung, dropped back. Light as he was, his weight on that sheer drop was too heavy for even Richard's strength.

Richard pulled till the agony in his back was unbearable, till the roots of his clenched teeth

voice no louder than the scratch of a pin, yet distinct as if spoken right in Richard's ear. "You save yourself! But listen! Tyke never cared for me. I tried to make her, an' she was hurt the way you used her. She loves just you, with all that's in her. That's the truth. It's the end now, an'—dyin' men don't lie!"

"Ketch hold again!" Richard's voice thickened; the veins in his forehead clotted; his muscles corded like ropes. He seized Fell, swung him back and forth slowly, faster, faster, up, up with a heave that wrenched every bone in its socket, until he thudded him on the roof.

"Quick!" For already spurts of fire were leaping out through their end of the roof.

Staggering in a blind agony of exhaustion, he pulled Fell to the back of the building.

"Here—round your hands!" He tore off his jacket—his overcoat he had stripped off before—and wound it around Fell's hands. "You first—you're light." He pushed him to the edge. "The rod'll hold you." He dropped, in a smother of smoke, at the edge of the roof.

He seemed to sink into a daze, out of which voices reached him very far off:

"Richard! Richard Ladd! Come on!" Then one voice, piercing in its anguish, above the men's, as a woman's voice may:

"Dick!"

"That's my little girl," he thought confusedly; then in a clear breath: "My little girl." And he grasped with his naked hands the lightning rod.

Richard opened his eyes, after a queer restless sleep, troubled by heat and cold and unhappy dream and fierce pain he could not wake out of. He lay in a wide tall room that seemed strange to him, yet over by the window, in a

blaze of sunlight, his mother sat knitting, pink and placid and dear.

"Hello, mother," he said, but the sound was such a husky breath he had to begin all over.

"Mornin', mother!" That went better.

His mother came to the bed at once.

"Richie, darlin'!"

She kissed him very gently, as if he were a precious thing she might injure, then went to the stove for a drink simmering there.

"Kind o' good," he said, smiling up at her. "Seems like I'd tasted it before."

"It's about the hundred-an'-oneth bowl o' beef tea you've taken," another voice said, and there was Tyke, taking his hand in hers and holding it against her cheek.

He thought she looked smaller than ever, and all her pretty color was gone.

"You been sick, dear!"

"Mercy me! Just shut up in the house quite a spell." That was Tyke's silver bubble of laughter.

Day after day Richard pondered the world now offered to his consideration. By long thoughts and many questions he pieced out his story.

Some one in the village had seen the fire, and rung the bell, which had brought the rescue party that had caught Fell and him as they had come down the rod. Tyke, unable to sleep, had seen it, too, and had run all the way there. Fell was back at the bank. Richard himself had suffered terribly from burns and torn hands and wrenched back.

Fell had been carried to Tyke's house, where the Widow Dolly, the village nurse, had tended him until he was well enough to go to the tavern. Richard had been taken to the Heights, to be nursed by his mother and his wife. He accepted their presence without question, too weak to wonder.

"Now, Richie," his mother told him one morning, when he was strong

enough to be propped up in a chair, "we're goin' to take you a-visitin'—Tyke an' me."

Her son smiled, but it was at the little homely name.

"Where's Tyke to, anyhow?"

"Oh, you'll see her real soon." His mother was bundling him up in shawls and quilts.

"Who'll I visit?"

"Tyke an' me. Now, don't you ask questions. Just be a good boy." She smiled at him.

Cephas drove Richard slowly around the hill and up the lane to his mother's door, then stopped with a chuckle.

The big house was there, but what had become of the little one? He looked again, and saw, like a thrust-out elbow of his mother's house, an addition shining with white paint and new large windows. Something in its outline smote his memory.

"You've tacked Tyke's house onto mother's!" he shouted.

"Come in! Come in!" Tyke herself was flying about like a bit of thistle-down in the March wind.

Into the little house they hurried him, and there they showed him, with delight, the big double door cut through from Tyke's foreroom into his mother's foreroom, so the two could be opened into one.

"Slick, ain't it?" Cephas called, as he went to blanket his horse.

Richard leaned back in the comfortable Boston rocker while Tyke flitted about putting pillows behind him.

"You see, Dicky, dear, we couldn't decide which ought to give in 'bout the house, your mother or me, so we said, 'Oh, lands, let's not have *your* house or *my* house any more. Let's tack 'em together, so we'll all be under one roof.' So the day after the night when the doctor said you were really goin' to live, we brewed up this plan." She darted a swift kiss on his hair.

Richard caught her and drew her down into a corner of the chair.

"How about *my* house?"

"Don't talk foolishness!" Her elfin eyes met his, and grew slowly luminous with a steady glow, as if the light of her spirit shone through.

"Fell told me—he remembered—when he thought 'twas the end—Dick, it *was* true! You know that, don't you?"

They looked at each other until the touch of soul on soul was too poignant. The man hid his face against her breast.

"Yes, I know it was true."

Tyke's laughter, sweet and happy, filled the room.

"This family has had a hundred years o' actin' up 'bout houses. Now it's *stopped*—forever!"

"Amen!" murmured Richard, his arms close around her.



A NATION'S "CHARACTER"

By Emily Newell Blair

SHOULD Germany win this war, and France, like many other mighty nations of the past, decline into a third-rate power, then a fourth-rate nation, then into senility, and finally into innocuous desuetude, what will history and men remember of her? What of her greatness will last? Will it be the fact that she was the richest nation of the earth; that, in their days, her kings were the most luxurious, her dressmakers the most famous, her exports the most numerous? Or will there linger in men's minds, centuries after she is but a name, along with that name, the idea of beauty, of artistic perception, of color and life and light and happiness? When the name of France is mentioned, will not the thinkers of the future conjure up the picture of a people with a spirit, keen and frank, not fearing to look life full in the face and call its foulness by its true name, yet ever seeking the truth; a people intense, alive, idealistic, striving ever for perfection, whether in clothes, art, or politics; a people aflame with ideas, and ready to sacrifice all to those ideas?

Should Germany win, and England, like other stanch nations of the past, go down to disruption, will men remember in the days to come that she was a stout nation, with beautiful estates, huge country houses, the strongest bank in the world? Will they remember that her factories were the busiest, that her trade encircled the globe, and that the sun never set on her possessions? Or, when some one reads the lines of Shakespeare, and seeks to reclaim some outline of the "island people," will he not think of a people who never knew fear; of men who kept their word, women who kept their purity; of a people who struggled for, and believed heart and soul in, self-mastery, and to a great degree reached it? Will not the ideal of Arthur at his Table Round, to which Englishmen aspired even though they failed to reach it, be longer linked with the word "English" than her wealth or huge navy?

If the Allies conquer, and Germany should—but we do not think that possible—be disrupted or become absorbed

or overwhelmed by Slavic peoples, will posterity remember Germany's military organization, her genius for war, her tremendous strides as a commercial nation, Bismarck's diplomacy of force, and William's diplomacy of gunpowder? Or will it not rather associate forever with the name of Germany the thought of loyalty, of forgetfulness of self for the good of the whole, of an almost infinite capacity for taking pains, for complete mastery of detail? Will it not think of Heidelberg long after Potsdam is forgotten, of Goethe long after Von Moltke is a myth? Will not the intellect of Germany and the unselfishness of her patriotism be remembered longer than her fighting force?

Look back at the nations that have passed away! What do we think of when we speak of Egypt? Of its pyramids, and a philosophy that is reborn into modern thought about once every ten years. What do we associate with Babylon? Richness, wealth, power? No! Foulness, materialism. When we read our Homer over, we think not of the size of Grecian armies, but of the Trojan valor that could hold out for ten years. And of more modern Greece, though ancient to us? We think of its sculpture, its art, its wonderful perception of beauty. Even of Rome, though we have more authentic records of it, what do we remember? Not its wealth, not its conquered territory, not its luxury. Rather, a people with a genius for organization, for government, with a capacity for understanding and framing law. In fact, posterity measures a country by what it has of the gifts of the spirit. The integrity of England, the idealism of France, the intellectuality of Germany—these are the traits that posterity will hold in grateful remembrance.

Americans have been called the idealists of the world. It is well for them to remember, in this time of crisis, that they, too, are building up a "character" to hand down to posterity. They, too, will be measured, when the time comes, not by their wealth, their strength, their pugnacity, but by their valor, their loyalty to their ideals—what fruits of the spirit they have, as a nation, developed.

Will a spirit of selfishness among "typical Americans" serve to develop any fruits of the spirit? Will it add to the real wealth of the country? Will it build up a "character"?

In this day it is well, perhaps, to consider the value of a man's moral contribution to his country.

The Fulfillment

By Rebecca Hooper Eastman

Author of "The Somnambulist," "The Chiffon Scarf," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY R. VAN BUREN

YOU do—you *do* love me!" Although there was a vestige of interrogation in the boy's voice it was little more than ninety-nine-one-hundredths triumphant.

"You can't *help* loving me—any more than I can help loving you."

There was a long, tremulous silence, and then:

"God forgive me, boy, but I do!"

They were in each other's arms at last, with his pure lips on hers.

"It's settled, then," whispered the boy thankfully. "You're a part of me now, and nothing can ever change it."

In that shining apple orchard, with the dear blossoms in their annual pink-and-white ecstasy, with the wind sending petals to kiss their cheeks and their hands and their hair, what wonder that the passion in each heart, which had been choked down through the fall and the long, cold winter—when each had seemingly ignored the other's existence, although achingly conscious of the other's slightest movement—what wonder that the accidental touch of their hands had broken down the barrier! And those apple blossoms which they were gathering to decorate the schoolroom were all to blame!

"Boy, dear, folks will say that we're crazy."

"What do we care for 'folks'?" He was answering her with the old right, wrong cry. "What do 'folks' matter, when every night of my life I go to sleep with the thought of you in my heart, and every morning I wake be-

fore the dawn, hardly able to wait to see you? And these last few days, the sight and smell of the flowers has made me so I couldn't eat or do anything but feel and live—you."

The boy's face had that angelic, evanescent look, so ravishing and so exalted that even *the* woman feels as if she were gazing at something sacred which she has no right to see. If he had dreamed that his soul had been there in his face for days—for any one to see—the boy would have promptly taken to the woods and stayed there until he was sure that the look had vanished forever.

"And you?" he urged, all uncertain of her again, not knowing that the reason she closed her eyes was because she wished to keep that look of his forever in her heart.

So she told him how she hadn't slept at all because she couldn't forget his eyes, and that, although she ought not to have let herself love him, he was right—she couldn't help it. At last she said—and it is always the woman who has to say this sort of thing:

"It's five minutes to one. It *must* be! And recess is over, and we must hurry."

With their arms so full of apple blossoms that they looked like two small apple trees, they climbed the stone wall, stopping on either side for a last kiss, and then ran down the little narrow road with its two long, green grass ribbons between the wheel tracks. When the teacher took her seat behind the



"What do we care for 'folks'? What do 'folks' matter, when every night of my life I go to sleep with the thought of you in my heart, and every morning I wake before the dawn, hardly able to wait to see you?"

tall desk, there was a wild new glory in her eyes that some of her pupils always vaguely remembered and associated with music.

But no one at all saw the boy's god-like, unearthly beauty; they all missed the deep flush on his face; they didn't notice the exquisite shadows under his eyes or the pale line around his lips, because he instinctively hid his face as he put the apple blossoms everywhere—over the doors, above the new black-board, and around the big, shiny black stove—glad that he had something to do with his hands, and much too uplifted to sit down calmly. He was so afraid, too, that the others would see her kisses as they lay burning on his lips. When he finally took his seat in the back row, as befitted the man-grown, oldest boy in school, his eyes met the teacher's, and held them in an all-infolding gaze.

Each was afterward to know many happy moments, but none like those stolen, matchless ones in the orchard, or the supreme, blinding ones in the new little red brick schoolhouse. Life was so clean and sweet and beautiful that it hurt—like an insupportable pain. Those few moments were, indeed, so nearly celestial that their weak mortal bodies could scarcely bear the weight of such great joy.

All this old-time love affair, however, doesn't seem to have much to do with the fact that young Charles Endicott had decided that he ought to go to the Pacific coast on business, and that Astrid, his four-months' bride, was to go with him, as she very properly should. And yet those apple-blossom days were indirectly, and very humorously, concerned with the fact that, just before they started, Astrid was beset with fears, for the absurd and trifling reason that she considered it was tempting Providence to leave her beloved "Grandma Barnes" alone in the

house with such an old ogre as Charles' father. Alone in a large house, with five servants and every luxury, sounded feasible until you knew the real state of things—that Grandma Barnes, aged eighty-five, and Father Endicott, who was far too old for seventy-nine—which is a much younger age than it used to be—that these two people hated each other with as much zest as the young Endicotts loved. And that is saying a very great deal!

Not having foreseen this antipathy, the Charles Endicotts, who were as decent-minded and generous a pair as ever built a new old-colonial mansion, had decided that they couldn't fully deserve this same new house if Grandma Barnes and Charles' father continued to live in the loneliness and impersonality of their separate hotels. That was how it came about that Grandma Barnes had a sumptuous room and bath in the southeast corner of the Endicotts' new house, while Father Endicott was ensconced in equally comfortable quarters in the southwest corner. And when, every night, at the half-past-seven dinner, the picturesque old couple sat opposite each other, with their silver hair and fine old features and spotless attire, Astrid and Charles smiled and exulted, as if two of the cherished family portraits had suddenly come down off the wall and condescended to dine with them.

It was often difficult, too, for the newly married pair to preserve their dignity before Stevens, their butler. For instance, Grandma Barnes was prone to make such informal remarks to Stevens as this:

"Heavens to Betsy, Stevens! What is this newfangled dish you want to palm off on me?"

And he would answer loudly, because she was, of course, a little deaf—and, oh, it pained Stevens to have to raise his voice!—"Mushrooms à la Monte Carlo, madam."

At which Grandma Barnes would elevate her skeptical left eyebrow and wither Stevens with a frosty "I guess I won't take any."

But when the mushrooms à la Monte Carlo got round to Father Endicott, he, just to show Grandma Barnes that he was young and sportive and not in his dotage, if other people were, would help himself liberally—taking more than his share—and say to Charles, before he'd even tasted them, the old scoundrel, "Excellent, my boy, excellent!" with one wicked eye on Grandma Barnes.

On the other hand, if Grandma Barnes ventured on an unusual dish, Father Endicott would be very—there's no other word for it—very snippy.

"Don't dare insult my digestion with that stuff, Stevens," he would remark, and assume a stuffy, unapproachable attitude for at least two minutes.

Before he was half through his sentence, Grandma Barnes would interrupt him with: "This fancy pudding is dreadful nice, Astrid," and make such a to-do over the dessert that Father Endicott's mouth would actually water for a taste of it, although, of course, he never went back on his first decision.

The irresistible old sinners were unanimous on one point only, namely, that they rebelled at being present at the Endicott dinner parties, which occurred with the hectic frequency incident to newly married establishments. On these festive occasions, Grandma Barnes dined from a tray in her room, while Father Endicott had a tray in his.

"Grandma, I should think you'd like to eat with Father Endicott," wheedled Astrid, patting her grandmother's arm. Ordinarily, Astrid could make any one on earth do exactly as she liked with a few of those funny little pats of hers. "You could have a table in the upstairs sitting room in front of the fire,

and it would be so comfy and sweet, with just you two dears together."

Not Grandma Barnes! For once, she was impervious to pats. Perhaps she remembered that in her own youth she had been shockingly unscrupulous about patting people when she wanted them to do things her way.

"I won't be left alone with the Old Gentleman Endicott," she said. "I couldn't enjoy a mouthful of my sup—my dinner, if I eat with that old dolt!"

"I won't sit down to dinner with the old fussbudget!" would be Father Endicott's emphatic, highly prefaced reply to Charles's suggestion that he dine with Grandma Barnes. "She's a putty-nosed old simpleton."

It may, perhaps, be seen why, when the Charles Endicotts were all ready to start, Astrid fretted herself almost ill over what might happen to two people who were so enamored of differing.

"It's like leaving children alone in the house with matches," said Astrid. "If the house doesn't burn down with them in their beds, they'll get quarreling, with no one to stop them, and they'll surely eat what doesn't agree with them and get sick, to spite each other. What can we do? There's no one in the family at liberty to come and stay with them, and neither will budge out of the house because they both like their rooms so much. And it is tempting Providence to leave them."

"Nonsense!" declared Charles, in his most superior masculine way. As he had both himself and Astrid to reassure, he spoke with tremendous firmness. "Nothing could possibly happen to 'em. They weren't kept in cotton wool and babied until they came to live with us, and I guess they'll manage to pull through all right without us."

"I know something will happen!" asseverated the unconvinced Astrid.

And well she might have been nervous, for the two old incorrigibles were plotting mischief in their hearts. They

were in the exhilarating, pleasantly devilish mood of a child, who, when he doesn't need a vacation at all, is left for a few weeks to his own sweet will. The world was theirs, and they intended to enjoy themselves. As Astrid had foreseen, something did happen to them, although it was a very different sort of a something from what she had expected.

Before the young Endicotts were out of sight of the house, Father Endicott

it better, sir, a little earlier," replied the cook, whose real name was Ellen.

"Have dinner at six, Hannah, do you hear? I don't care myself, but old Mis' Barnes would like it better."

"All right, sir," answered Ellen, almost upsetting Father Endicott in her sudden dash to the ice box for the roast.

Hardly had Father Endicott emerged from the kitchen and gone into the li-



"Heavens to Betsy, Stevens! What is this newfangled dish you want to palm off on me?"

rushed to the kitchen to carry out a choice scheme. He had never been in his son's kitchen but once before, but that didn't prevent his strutting about and owning it now.

"What time you going to have dinner to-night, Hannah?" he asked the cook pompously. Her name was not Hannah, but Father Endicott thought it ought to be, because she looked like a Hannah he had once known.

"Seven o'clock, instead of half past, sir. Mrs. Endicott thought you'd like

brary when Grandma Barnes came rustling down the back stairs. It was her fifth visit to the kitchen, and she had always owned it, as it was proper that she should, she having known a kitchen or two before that upstart of an Ellen had been born.

"Ellen, I guess while my granddaughter's away, we'll have dinner at six o'clock. It would be better for the Old Gentleman Endicott's stomach. It ain't strong, and while they are away, I'm going to see that he gets to bed early."

When Stevens announced dinner at six o'clock, each of the two hypocrites inspected the other carefully, hoping to find that the other was enormously upset over the dinner hour.

"Ain't it nice to have dinner early?" asked Grandma Barnes. Her tone was pleasant, but her manner was distinctly saucy and independent and calculated to play the very old dickens with Father Endicott.

"I ain't got any patience with such late dinners," said Father Endicott furiously—because he was disappointed that she hadn't flown into a rage. "Bad for the maids, bad for the butler, and damn bad for the folks that eat 'em!"

Grandma Barnes caught only part of what he said, and gloated over the "damn" which she thought she had inspired.

The instant dinner was over, each one marched to his room, slammed the door, locked it, and was at once desperately lonesome and consumed with eagerness to know what the other was doing. Father Endicott stood it about five minutes, and then he sought the kitchen again, where, as every one knows, even in the dulllest homes, there is always something going on, and society—of a sort.

"Hannah," he roared at Ellen, "old Mis' Barnes would enjoy her breakfast better if she was to have it at seven o'clock. Do you hear?"

"Yes, sir," replied Ellen in a chipper tone. Like all the other servants, she was being paid extra to humor the two beloved old autocrats.

As if they were a pair of mechanical toys that went by clockwork, while Father Endicott was stalking up the front stairs, Grandma Barnes was again creeping down the back ones.

"Ellen, I've been thinking, and I have an idea that the Old Gentleman Endicott gets faint waiting so long for his breakfast. I guess, until they get back,

we'll have breakfast at seven. Have you fixed the fire for the night, Ellen?"

Having thus assumed the responsibility seemly in the woman of the house, Grandma Barnes went to the front door, opened it and inspected the world, and then went peacefully upstairs to her room, leaving the front door hospitably ajar. Stevens, who had followed her with a catlike tread, closed it and returned to the servants' sitting room, leaving *that* door open, so that he would be ready for any escapade. Grandma Barnes, meanwhile, was sitting in a chair in her room, facing the hall door expectantly. She had an inkling that Father Endicott would be unable to maintain his immense privacy, and she was right, for soon there was a knock on her door—which she did not hear—and then Father Endicott burst in upon her.

"Where's the *Transcript*?" he shouted. He was splendidly angry, the old oaf.

"I dunno, Mr. Endicott." And how maddeningly innocent was Grandma Barnes!

"You had it before dinner. I saw you, Mis' Barnes."

"How?" Grandma Barnes was purposely deaf, because she knew that he hated to repeat.

"You *had* it before dinner. I *saw* you!"

"I had it before. I ain't had it since."

"You've forgot."

"I guess not, Mr. Endicott." Her black eyes snapped.

"I guess I'll look round your room, Mis' Barnes."

"Look, but you won't find it."

Grandma Barnes, with outraged dignity, walked across the hall into Mr. Endicott's room, and picked up the paper from his desk, where he had left it when he had sallied forth in quest of adventure at any cost.

"Stop rummaging round my room, Mr. Endicott," she said. "The *Tran-*

script was in your room all the time.

"I guess not, Mis' Barnes." Although he knew it was, the hardened impostor! "I guess you found it and put it there, Mis' Barnes."

"I ain't a liar, Mr. Endicott."

"I didn't say you were."

"You said *as much*."

"I didn't."

"You did!"

"I *didn't*!"

Having by this ruse had a harmless, cozy little skirmish, Father Endicott returned to his room greatly refreshed. His blood tingled pleasantly, for contradicting Grandma Barnes was his choicest pastime. Grandma Barnes was equally entertained and invigorated by the bout. It was so nice to talk back and be human, without having your pretty granddaughter tactfully hush you up. Both the combatants resolved to have a really interesting row early the next morning.

Accordingly, when they met at the seven-o'clock breakfast, Grandma Barnes began pugnaciously:

"I don't know how you like my having breakfast at seven o'clock, Mr. Endicott."

"Like it? Heavenly Peter, it was my own idea."

"There's no good heavenly-Petering, for it was *mine*."

"You ask Hannah."

"You ask Ellen yourself."

Father Endicott turned to Stevens with his most bellicose expression.

"Stevens, didn't I go out in the kitchen and ask Hannah for an early breakfast?"

"Yes, sir."

"Now, Stevens!" said Grandma



"Hannah," he roared at Ellen, "old Mis' Barnes would enjoy her breakfast better if she was to have it at seven o'clock. Do you hear?"

Barnes. "You know you saw me with your own eyes asking Ellen to have breakfast at seven."

"You asked her, too, madam."

Both being right, Father Endicott dropped the subject, and by his pensive expression Grandma Barnes decided that his thoughts were far afield.

"I like a *heart*y breakfast," he said at length, as the climax of his reminiscences.

"So do I," agreed Grandma Barnes, before she thought.

"Pie?"

"I'd take some, if there was any."

"Stevens," said Father Endicott, with hauteur, "inquire and see if Hannah hasn't an apple pie up her sleeve."

Stevens vanished, suffering. Pie, indeed! Father Endicott noted the rigidity of Stevens' shoulders.

"Mis' Barnes, do you like butlers?"

"No, Mr. Endicott. Makes me feel as if the sexton lived right in the house with me." Grandpa Barnes had been a parson.

When Stevens returned, with a mournful face and an apple pie, he was greeted by the information that he wouldn't be needed any more until "they" returned.

"Go home and see your folks, Stevens," dictated Mr. Endicott.

"Thank you kindly, sir, but I'd better stay."

"Haven't you got any folks?"

"Oh, yes, sir; everybody has folks. But Mr. and Mrs. Endicott wouldn't like my going, I know. I'm to take no time off till they get back."

"I'd like to know why?"

"While you're dismissing Stevens, I'll go and tell Ellen we don't need a cook—just for us two," said Grandma Barnes, who was pining to make a five-layer cake.

Neither Ellen nor Stevens, however, could be prevailed upon to budge, because, in addition to the raise in wages, each was to receive ten dollars for sticking it out. And each had already decided what to buy with that ten dollars.

"Well, Ellen," said Grandma Barnes, "as long as you won't go, I guess we'll have dinner at noon. Old Mr. Endicott would like his dinner better in the middle of the day."

"All right, Mis' Barnes," replied Ellen, shifting to the other hip.

Father Endicott came importantly from the butler's pantry.

"Hannah, Mis' Barnes would like it better to have her dinner at noon till they get back."

"All right, sir," agreed Ellen, shifting back again.

"Breakfast at half past six, Hannah, dinner at noon, and supper't half past five. And you set to and make a pantry

full of pies, and we'll see if we can't have pie on the table every meal."

"Amen to *that*!" said Grandma Barnes.

They bustled out of the kitchen, each warning the other not to squeeze his fingers in the swinging door, each tired of agreeing, and each longing for a real fight. At length, Grandma Barnes thought of a way to make Father Endicott hopelessly wroth, and at the same time to enjoy herself in the way she liked best.

"Mr. Endicott," she said, with deep cunning, "was you ever fond of playing checkers?"

"Checkers!" Father Endicott swelled with pride. "Mis' Barnes, you ask some of the people I've beaten whether or not I'm fond of checkers."

"Have they got a checkerboard?"

"No, and I've told Charles a dozen times he needed one."

"We could buy one."

"I'll go right off downtown this morning and get a checkerboard, Mis' Barnes."

"You ain't able, Mr. Endicott. I'll go, and you stay home and rest up, so's to be able to play. You don't know what kind of a checkerboard I want."

"I'm six years younger'n you, Mis' Barnes, and if you're so set on going, I'll go along to look after you. The streets ain't safe for a woman of your age."

"You'll need me with you to look after you, Mr. Endicott. You ain't got any distance glasses, and you'll get run down if I don't steer you."

What with each of the two old saints laboriously looking after the other, and the general public and policemen and truckmen looking after both, their shopping expedition two or three times tied up the traffic, besides being very exciting and engrossing. There were so many interesting shop windows! And it was such a joy to be able to look and look and look and look, without

having your son or your granddaughter tug your arm and say:

"Come, now, remember you're getting tired, and we ought to be hurrying home for your nap!"

They stared fascinatedly into shop windows that contained things they didn't need and never would need, such as bicycles and the magnificent results of the dry-cleaning process. They spent an entire hour walking round and round in a ten-cent store, picking up saucepans and tin horns and straw hats with a surprised "My, only ten cents!" and buying, of course, nothing. Intoxicated with the sheer joy of looking, they gazed in at pearls and dazzling diamonds lying on white velvet in jewelers' windows, with the same joy with which they stared in at the rabbits, squirrels, white mice, and guinea pigs in the animal store.

As for the object of their shopping expedition, why, no humdrum, ordinary, first-one-they-try-to-work-off-on-you checkerboard would do for them. Each carried an ideal, superexcellent checkerboard in his mind's eye, which the actual checkerboard must live up to. They had to visit five shops before they were both suited, and even then Father Endicott had hankerings for one they'd seen in the third shop. They finally settled on the fifth, however, and when each had paid for half and the matter of change had been satisfactorily straightened out, they started for home, taking turns carrying the checkerboard.

"That clock's wrong," said Father Endicott, observing a clock that was marked "Standard Time."

"Course it is! It ain't more than half past ten," purred Grandma Barnes.

They could both tell time infallibly by their appetites, and they didn't feel at all faint from hunger, on account of the unwonted amount of apple pie they had eaten for breakfast. When they finally reached home, at a quarter after

three, the little retinue of servants hailed them with relief.

"Next time, Mr. Endicott, I'll go along," said Stevens firmly. "I didn't know either of you was going out."

The checkerboard shoppers ate heartily, and then, although each strongly recommended that the other lie down, according to their usual custom, neither would. Both were, in fact, too impatient to get at the game. So they played until dark, and every game they played Father Endicott was hopelessly beaten, just as Grandma Barnes had known that he would be when she had suggested the game in the beginning. And the more Father Endicott was beaten, the madder he got—just as she had also anticipated. He had always been a rather formidable player, and defeat was bitter.

"You can't possibly beat *me*, Mr. Endicott," bragged Grandma Barnes in positively cruel triumph. "I never was beaten—not for fifty or sixty years, anyway. My husband was a traveling clergyman, you know, and I've beaten every clergyman in New England, in my day."

"You don't play fair!"

"What's that?"

"You cheat!"

"I don't cheat!"

"You do, too!"

"Supper is served," interrupted Stevens hastily.

In speechless wrath, the adversaries walked out to the supper table and jerked out their chairs. Stevens "shoved up" Grandma Barnes and picked up Father Endicott's napkin, which he always dropped as soon as he leaned forward to take his glass of water. Stevens was most assiduous and placating, but he made no impression. Supper was eaten in malicious silence, and both looked as angry as they knew how, until, overcome by exercise and excitement and the lack of the usual nap,



There were so many interesting shop windows! And it was such a joy to be able to look and look and look and look, without having your son or your granddaughter tug your arm.

each fell sound asleep in the midst of dessert.

Stevens then earned some of his extra pay by a great display of tact. He woke Grandma Barnes by gently shaking her chair. Having roused her, he pointed silently to Mr. Endicott.

"The old gentleman's all beat out!" reveled Grandma Barnes. "I'm so sick of the sight of him that I guess I'll go right to bed, Stevens, before he wakes up. He don't give me any peace at all."

After she was safely in her room, Stevens worked the same maneuvers on Father Endicott, with the same result; except that Father Endicott, as he confided to Stevens that the old lady was getting very feeble, was perhaps the more jubilant of the two.

Day after day they played checkers, and Grandma Barnes always beat, and Father Endicott was always angry and told her that she cheated, which in turn made her angry; so that, both being daily roused as they had never again expected to be, they both were far happier than when the young Endicotts were at home trying to pacify them. Life was as stimulating and enjoyable as it could be, until Grandma Barnes spoiled everything by one afternoon very transparently allowing Father Endicott

to beat. Considering that his dignity had been undermined, he flew into such a rage that he really frightened his enemy. She was afraid that he would have a fit of apoplexy, and so was Stevens, for his face turned a purple red, and he stormed unintelligibly, and waved away all who came near him to offer him a glass of water or to fan him or distract him in any way. Father Endicott was done with checkers forever, and he was quite

through with Grandma Barnes. He doubted if he could ever again stay in the same room with Grandma Barnes for over five minutes and live through the ordeal. And *when* Charles came back, he was going to—

He stopped suddenly in the midst of a sentence, because of the surprising spectacle of Grandma Barnes, who, instead of remaining his terrified audience, had nonchalantly seated herself at the grand piano. After four or five false starts, she succeeded in rendering, very tinklingly, a simple version of an old duet called "Two Forest Nymphs." Here, at last, was an opportunity for Father Endicott to show that he had once been a singer of no mean ability, and he immediately abandoned anger and, marching up beside the piano, turned to face an invisible audience and sang a loud, uncertain tenor. Grandma Barnes began a weak, equally untrustworthy, but never-flagging soprano, with the result that a more comical, unconsciously pathetic, and touching duet was never sung anywhere. Both of the old singers were so happy in the associations evoked by the resurrected duet that, all unknowingly, the tears rolled down their cheeks. And they sang it over and over again, because it was the only duet they both knew, and it seemed as if they must sing.

When they had been through it ten or a dozen times at the very least, Father Endicott said "Wait!" and almost fell down the stairs twice in his zeal to mount them quickly. When he returned from his bedroom, he had in his hand a fife, and, solemnly standing in the exact center of the room, he played, with great difficulty and much hard breathing, a rather original version of the "Irish Washerwoman's Reel," which is surely as good and decent a name for a dance tune as some more modern ones. Not having touched the fife—to play on it—for

over twenty years, there were times when Father Endicott unwittingly insinuated a bar of "Money Musk" or "The Sailor's Hornpipe." Inspired by this potpourri of old dances, and being all keyed up anyway after "Two Forest Nymphs," Grandma Barnes very pantingly took a few fancy steps and curtsied to an imaginary partner. It was too bad that there was no one to see them and enjoy the dear old boy and girl spirit that can never be wholly crushed out of anybody, and that plays a much larger part in all our schemes of life than we realize.

Father Endicott, who hadn't a remnant of breath to spare, because it was more than he could do to muster enough wind to play, nevertheless decided to join the dance. As they went through the grand right and left and balanced to corners, neither one was dancing in the Endicotts' drawing-room. Father Endicott was opening the ball in an old town hall with the prettiest girl in Salem for his partner, and Grandma Barnes was dancing with a boy who had kissed her unforgettably in an old apple orchard, and who always after that had held her by such a magic spell that she felt, although she had married some one else, that she belonged mostly to the apple-orchard boy.

Overcome by shortness of breath and the keen beauty of her memories, Grandma Barnes was the first to give out and sink down on the sofa. Gradually she left her long-ago boy in the orchard with his arms around her and glided down through the years to realize that, Father Endicott having recovered from his checkerboard frenzy sufficiently to unearth his fife, it was incumbent on her to seek her cedar chest and disinter some ancient treasure to display to him. When, after an exhaustive search, she came downstairs again, he was still dancing and blowing into his fife, but without enough breath to make any music. The rhythm was

all that was left, and even that was slowing down.

"Come here!" said Grandma Barnes dictatorially. She had seated herself on the sofa with her hands behind her back, and by her manner one could tell that the thing she would presently display was something pretty important. "Draw up your chair and sit down in front of me, Mr. Endicott."

Almost devoid of breath, Father Endicott was too weary to disobey. When he had recovered sufficiently to be worth talking to, Grandma Barnes took from behind her a roll of tissue paper, which had been folded and unfolded and refolded so many times that it was as withered as a dried apple and about the same color. On being unrolled, this gave way to a fine old hand-embroidered handkerchief—gentleman's size—also yellow with age, and ready to crumble if you weren't very tender with it. But it was the article round which this handkerchief was rolled that Grandma Barnes was so mysterious about.

"When I was just a little mite," she began, "it was the fashion for little girls to make cross-stitch samplers. You embroidered the alphabet in small letters across the top of your sampler, and under that you embroidered the alphabet in large letters. And then some folks just worked in their names and the year they were born, but I wanted to make an extry-good sampler, so I made a cross-stitch house on mine, with a wide path leading up to it and a pine tree on each side. My green cotton gave out, and there wasn't any more in town, so I never finished the right-hand pine tree, and it's kind of bothered me all my life. Astrid wanted to get the sampler framed to hang up here in the drawing-room, so she got me some more green thread to finish my right-hand pine tree. And——"

"Why don't you show me your old sampler, if you're going to?" sputtered

Father Endicott, who had had about as much as he could stand of this silly chatter of cross-stitches, alphabets, and green thread.

"I will—in time—Mr. Endicott. But before you see it, I want you should hear something awful I did once. Little girls"—Father Endicott writhed, but Grandma Barnes cared not a whit for that—"little girls always put their name and the year they were born across the bottom of their samplers. Well, Mr. Endicott, when I was twenty-six and old enough to know better, I fell in love with a boy of twenty. First off, I told him I'd marry him, because I was so carried away with him that I was fit for the lunatic asylum. And I didn't want him to know how old I was, so I ripped the 1830 out of my sampler and told him I was born in '34. And he never found out I told a fib. This afternoon, Mr. Endicott, I'm going to put that 1830 back."

With fingers that trembled a little, she unrolled the handkerchief slowly, so as not to dazzle Father Endicott too much. First he was allowed to see the small letters, then the large letters, and then, after a dramatic pause, the house. Although it was a jolly little place, that cross-stitch house without any door—which made the path leading up to it rather superfluous—Father Endicott yawned prodigiously and looked very disdainful—until the sampler was fully unrolled and he saw the name that had been painstakingly cross-stitched by small, fat fingers three-quarters of a century before.

"'Sarah Dewsbury, born March 1st,'" he read unbelievably. Then a shiver and a tremble went over him. "You—why, Mis' Barnes—you didn't ever keep school near—near Salem, did you?"

They looked at each other with new, wondering eyes, and then their lips began to move slightly, although neither said anything.

"Mr. Endicott," said Grandma Barnes at last, "I—I asked you the first time I saw you—at their engagement party—if you was the Robert Endicott that went to school just outside Salem. And you said no."

"Mebbe I did. Mebbe I thought you were so old I wouldn't take any interest in anything you had to say. I never thought— Mis' Barnes, you don't look a bit like her— You aren't—you *couldn't* be—the girl I once made love to in the Perkins' apple orchard!"

"I am, Mr. Endicott, I am!"

Father Endicott shot up into the air and stood erect before her, the old fire in his eyes. For a brief moment he was again in his prime.

"Well, then, what did you mean, after promising me, by making off so I couldn't ever find you, and so I 'most drowned myself for love of you, and so I didn't marry until I was over forty—waiting for you? I waited twenty years for you, Mis' Barnes. I should have thought you'd waited for me."

"It wa'n't right, Mr. Endicott, for a woman twenty-six to marry a boy twenty. You didn't know how old I was, and I couldn't make up my mind to tell you. It nearly killed me to go away and cover my tracks. But you said you wouldn't wait until you was



"I waited twenty years for you, Mis' Barnes. I should have thought you'd waited for me."

older, and so I knew I was right in going. You know now that I was right."

There was a pause, during which they looked, not at each other, but at the blazing fire. Each had married happily, but neither had ever known anything like that first sweet, clean, beautiful love that had proclaimed itself among the apple blossoms.

"Ain't it nice?" asked Grandma Barnes softly.

"Ain't what nice?"

"Your son and my granddaughter,

Mr. Endicott. They're living out our love."

Father Endicott turned stodgy. He was not to be sentimentally bowled over at his age; no indeed! If it were true that old Mrs. Barnes was the seductive apple-orchard girl of his dreams, why, she should see that the gentleman at whom she had the honor of gazing was no lovesick boy, but a man of another caliber entirely—a man who looked upon things, first of all, practically.

"I guess what makes them love each other so is the same thing that made us set such store by each other," mused Grandma Barnes, radiantly ignoring Father Endicott's callousness.

"You're a silly old fool, Mis' Barnes!" he stormed ineffectively. "And I'm going up to get ready for supper."

This was something new. Father Endicott was always spick and span; he *never* got ready for supper.

When he reached his room, he locked the door and sat down in his favorite chair to think. First and foremost, he sent up a prayer of thankfulness and yielded to feelings he hadn't wished to show. The girl in the apple orchard *had* cared—she had cared enough to give him up. And she had suffered in doing it. It had hurt her more than it had him. In the midst of his thankfulness, he winced. Why *did* his apple-orchard girl have to be old Mrs. Barnes, of all people? How disenchanting, how prosaic and irritating, it was to have *Mrs. Barnes* turn out to be the fondly cherished idol of those fragrant, moon-drenched nights! Why had fate ironically brought them together in their dotage? The dear old dream was spoiled!

Then, mercurially, Father Endicott brightened up a little, as he remembered that he had lived long enough to see a great many wrongs righted and a great many inexplicable things ex-

plained. Sometimes, when he had not just been beaten at checkers and was feeling a *young* seventy-nine, he almost thought that all things were straightened out finally, if you only had the patience and bigness and wisdom to see it. Perhaps old Mrs. Barnes was right. Perhaps Astrid and Charles *had* happily fulfilled the dream of their elders. Perhaps the reason that Charles had been so happy—so deliriously happy that every one remarked on it—was because he was the apple-orchard boy intensified.

And as for Astrid, she didn't *look* like the apple-orchard girl, because no one could ever be so beautiful again, and yet she *was* like her. Always with that same little irrepressible skip of happiness in her walk, always smiling to herself a little, as if she had just thought of something perfectly delightful, always sitting in the sun, always moving the plants so that they could have *their* fill of the sun, always wanting *you* to sit in the sun, and always patting your arm when she got you there! Those funny little well-remembered pats! Why hadn't he guessed it? They were the same pats with which a certain youthful teacher had rewarded good boys and girls. Why, yes, yes, yes! Astrid and Charles *were* the apple-orchard boy and girl. There wasn't the slightest doubt of it, and he would go right down and tell Mrs. Barnes that she was right.

He found her energetically working on the sampler. She had just put the last luxuriant green branch on the circumspect right-hand pine tree, and she was attacking the 1830.

"Mis' Barnes," said Father Endicott brazenly, "if they should ever have any children, those children would be ours, because Astrid is yours and Charles is mine."

"I didn't have to go upstairs and sit by myself to think of *that*!" remarked Grandma Barnes stiffly. "And I must

say, too, that even if you are dreadful hard to get along with, Mr. Endicott, I'm glad to find out you set such store by what I once was."

"Well, I did, Mis' Barnes."

"So did I, Mr. Endicott."

The upshot of all this was that when Astrid and Charles returned, they found Grandma Barnes and Father Endicott on the top step, waiting for them in a white heat of excitement.

"Charles, Charles, you *do* look like him!" said Grandma Barnes, hugging Charles with a vigor that surprised him and utterly ignoring Astrid.

"Astrid, you come right in the house with me!" commanded Father Endicott, in his most lordly fashion. "I want you should know about old Mis' Barnes' sampler."

When the two former lovers, who didn't care a tuppence for each other as they now were, poured out the incoherent story of their early love, As-

trid and Charles were entirely convinced that *they* were the apple-orchard boy and girl.

"Why, Charles, this explains why we love each other more than any two people that ever lived!" said Astrid.

"It's uncanny, and it's wonderful, and it's true!" decided Charles, who had turned pale with the poetry of it all. "Now I know why I love you better than the other fellows love their wives."

And right there—with Stevens just coming in with the tea, too—the outrageous pair embraced as if they'd been separated for years.

"Somehow it seems as if you were even *better* looking than Charles," said Grandma Barnes to Father Endicott. "And don't things come round real nice?"

"I hate to acknowledge it, Mis' Barnes, but sometimes I am obliged to admit that they do," replied Father Endicott.

THE PEACE OF THE HILLS

UP in the mighty hills, where the breeze of the sea
Tosses the purple bells of the budding flowers
That nod to the musical drone of the questing bee
When the sun breaks forth in a golden symphony
And life is not measured by joy or grief or the hours,
There stands a palace splendid with many towers,
Up in the mighty hills.

Its gate is of burnished gold and ivory;
Its roof is jeweled with radiant silver stars;
And within is a throne that is veiled in mystery;
And the Weaver of Dreams alone has the magic key,
And the Weaver of Dreams alone may unlock the bars
Of the palace where never the voice of mortal mars
The peace of the mighty hills.

Have ye sought for the gates of gold and ivory?
Have ye stooped to the fragrant bells of the budding flowers?
Have ye heard the musical drone of the questing bee,
When the sun breaks forth in a golden symphony
And life is not measured by joy or grief or the hours?
And so ye may enter the gate of those magic towers
And the peace of the mighty hills.

HENRY HERBERT KNIBBS.

The One Chance

By Grace Lea Arny

Author of "Happy People," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY G. W. HARTING

THIS is not a story. It is the telling of that truth that is stranger than fiction, and it begins with the death of Tom Morton's godfather and Tom's inheritance of a tidy sum in stocks and bonds that were, as the saying is, as good as gold.

Without loss of time—indeed in the late afternoon of the same fateful day—Tom laid the fortune, nicely folded in the envelope of his heart, at the feet of Nancy Stanley. It had been in his mind for some time past to lay his heart at Nancy's feet, but Nancy lived in a gray-stone mansion on Nob Hill, and Tom was only "something" in one of the big offices of a big steamship line, and so he waited. And then came his godfather's bequest, and the thing was done.

It was doubtful from the first whether Nancy would say "yes." She sat well forward on the long Roman settee in her father's library, slim fingers clasped in her lap, her gray eyes unfaltering before Tom's gaze. In contrast to the ivory white of her dress and the ash blond of her hair, her lips and cheeks held the vivid color of the geraniums that clamored against the gray walls of her home. Cool and well poised was Nancy, by the grace of the world in which she lived, but it was her heart's blood that stained her cheeks that lovely crimson. When she spoke, her voice was noticeably tense; wherefore she sought the shelter of a laugh. Many men had laid their hearts at Nancy's feet, but never yet had she been able to overcome the emotional catch in

her throat that a proposal gave her. "Why, Tommy!" she said, the while she caught her breath; and then, reverting to formula, "I never dreamed that you——"

"Why not?" asked Tom. His methods were direct.

She laughed again at that and gained her birthright of assurance.

"No evidence—maybe—and your reputation as a heartless flirt——"

"I thought I'd given evidence——"

"An equal amount to me—and to Gladys Davis—and the pretty little girl from Honolulu—and half a dozen others——"

"I wasn't in a position before——"

She changed her line of attack quickly, lifting the fingers of one hand to tell time with a pretty gesture.

"You've known me six—eight months, is it?—and you think you know me well enough to stand the sight of me—day in, day out—for the rest of your life. How do you know the ghost of some other girl won't rise to haunt you——"

He stood up suddenly at that and walked over to a window, as if her laughing words had stung him. Curiously enough, the hurt recoiled upon herself, but she persisted, as one burns to cure:

"How do you know, Tommy? A man who's lost his heart so many times—could he be sure of himself, do you think?"

He came back from the window, but did not sit beside her again. He stood by the table and shifted a heavy-handed

paper cutter between the fingers of one hand. The other hand he thrust into his pocket, and he looked down at the paper cutter as he talked in the way a man does when words come hard.

"I've known you seven months—since the New Year's dance at the Brockhursts', to be exact—and I've seen you on an average of twice a week since then. I'm not one of these—what d'you call 'em?—psychology chaps, so I can't tell you why I feel the way I do about you. You're right—I've rushed other girls; but when a fellow goes round to dances and such, he's got to do his share. You're the only one of the bunch, though, that I don't get tired of if one date runs into another—if the machine breaks down, say, and we have to foot it any distance—



"As for any other girl—there never has been another girl I've wanted to marry"—he hesitated for the space of a minute or two—"except one."

or if we're on a house party and rain keeps us indoors too long——"

"Good pals?" suggested Nancy quickly.

"A good pal is what I want for my wife. I'd have told you all this before, except for what you had and what I didn't have. As for any other girl—there never has been another girl I've wanted to marry"—he hesitated for the space of a minute or two, and the grandfather's clock in the hall chimed musically across the silence with the effect of an accompaniment to his next words—"except one," said Tommy.

The thing might have remained unsaid and no harm done, apparently, but a fatal honesty prompted him.

"Ah!" breathed Nancy. "Tell me about her!" One might have said from her persistence that she cared a great deal; yet again she might only be striving to open his eyes for him, after the fashion of the coolly reasoning young woman that she was.

"There wasn't much to it—to tell. I'm a fool for mentioning it, I suppose, but if you want a full confession——"

Very tersely he told it, but Nancy read between the words. It had begun with a romantic incident—the meeting with a girl on the Oakland ferry one September night, the conversation waked by a passing courtesy, the man's dreary mood dispelled by the girl's enthusiasm.

"She was making connections with the nine-fifty Sunset Limited. Just in from Honolulu that morning and hiking it home to some burg in Texas, where she taught school. The city had made a hit with her. It did look pretty good while she was talking."

Nancy nodded. She knew the look of the city on the hills at night—the clear, star-dusted sky arching above, the lights flung in scattered profusion over the terraced coast, the ferry building a magic palace at the water's edge. And she guessed, as a woman will, the

witchery that the sight, and the sibilant sound of the gliding boat, the darkness, low voices, the girl's laughter, perhaps, had woven around the two.

"She was a little thing in a dark suit, with a big bunch of violets and a box of candy. Some dub on the boat had loaded her down, I suppose. Anyway, she had more than she could manage—with her suit case and steamer rug—and so I saw her to her train. I've never put much stock in girls you could strike up an acquaintance with like that—they're not much—but she was different. There was hardly anybody on the boat—and she needed help with her truck and—— Oh, well, she wasn't the sort of girl a fellow'd get gay with. You could tell that from the sound of her voice. Then I got a good look at her under the station lights——"

"Pretty?"

"Some people might not think so. She had a little white face and big eyes—a pointed chin. So she went off. Then I got a note thanking me for my trouble, and I answered it, and pretty soon I was dating the weeks from Tuesday—the day the mail got in from Amarylís, Texas."

The paper cutter slipped once too often and clattered on the table. He let it lie.

"What happened next, Tommy?" After all, it seemed not so hard to pass over the consideration of this love affair. Nancy had traveled on the Sunset Limited, and knew just how many sand-drifted, wasting miles lay between San Francisco and Amarylís, Texas.

"Oh, the old story—trouble with the mails. I was sent up the coast on business, and, when I got back, my mail was skimpy enough to make me think some of it had been lost. I wrote and got my letter back, with the remark that the party had moved, without leaving any address."

"And you never heard from her again?"

"No. She used to write about wanting to go North to cultivate her voice. She may have done that. There was some kind of a tangle. What's the difference now? It was pretty fierce for a while, but I was fighting for ground under my feet in the office, and a trip to Texas was in the same class with a trip to the moon. Oakland had to be the end of creation, as far as I was concerned." He faced her squarely. "I hear there's a pretty big world outside of it, and I'd like to see some of it now—and I'm asking you to see it with me. On my word, that little girl from Texas is the only one I've thought seriously about, and I haven't heard from her in three years."

"But you cared so much for her—She was your 'first love,' Tommy. She must have been magnetic to make you care that way after seeing her just once—under the lights of a railway station."

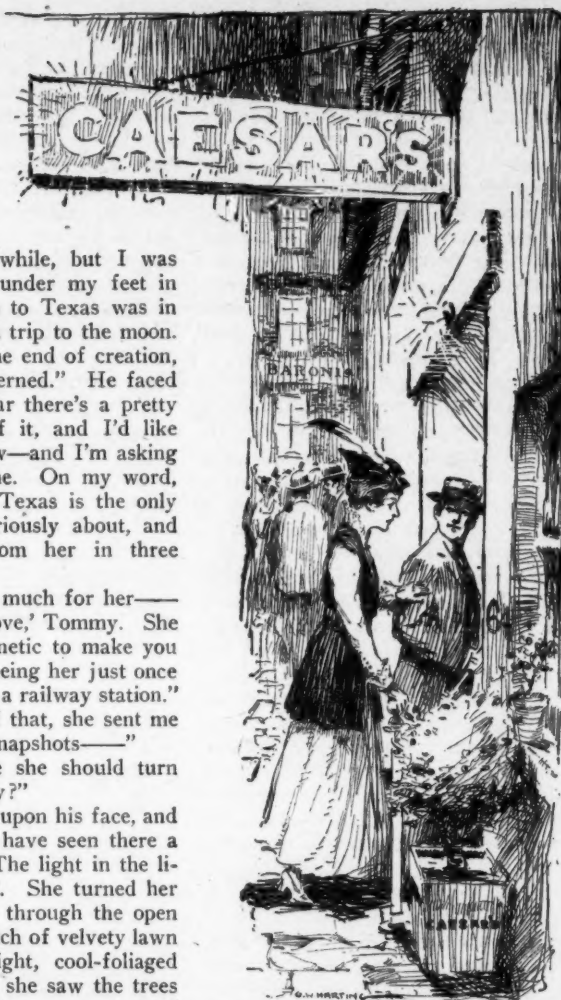
"For the matter of that, she sent me a picture and some snapshots——"

"Suppose—suppose she should turn up some day, Tommy?"

Nancy's eyes were upon his face, and she may or may not have seen there a flicker of emotion. The light in the library was not bright. She turned her head and looked out through the open window across a stretch of velvety lawn to a group of straight, cool-foliaged eucalyptus trees, and she saw the trees distinctly and noted the even texture of the lawn, which shows somewhat the state of her mind.

"There's not one chance in a thousand—in a million—that I'll ever see or hear from her again; one chance in a great many more than that that it would make any difference to me if I did."

Nancy toyed with the slender plati-



Tom Morton led the way down the flight of steps to the basement dining room.

num chain that hung around her neck. Absently she touched its setting of moonstones, and again she laughed—merely as an introduction to speech.

"It's sweet of you to tell me all this, Tommy," she said, "because really I

haven't a right to question so closely. I'm twenty-five, you see, and few girls come to that age without sundry emotional adventures of their own. And I haven't offered any confessions myself, have I? There's one chance in a million, as you say, that you'll ever see the—the ferry girl again; one in a great many more than that that it would make any difference to you if you did—and so——” He took both hands from his pockets at the word of encouragement, but she stopped him with a quick gesture. “No—no! Wait, Tommy! I can't answer you like this. I must think about it a little longer. It isn't as if we were young and foolish—and being swept off our feet. We're neither of us suffering from *'la grande passion'*—it's a question whether the feeling we have is strong enough to take its place.”

She rose and stood beside him, slender and alluring, her eyes on a level with his own. With a gesture that was frankly and impulsively sympathetic, she laid her hand on his for an instant.

“I'll go to dinner with you to-night, if you'll ask me—just to show that we'll keep on being pals, even if we're never anything more. I'm supposed to go to a dinner dance at the Palace, but we'll slip off instead to one of those quaint little places where you really ought to have a chaperon. It will be a great lark, and—we'll celebrate your coming into your fortune.”

And so they dined at Caesar's. It is a large-sized room with perhaps a score of little tables, a hardy palm or two, a cleared space in the middle of the floor for dancing, and in one corner a platform where the performers group around the piano. To get to it, you pass from Market Street to more humble thoroughfares, where show windows flaunt the gleam of Oriental embroideries and carvings. You pass these and their less pretentious neighbors with stock of dried nuts and fruits and queer candies; there is one that

sells warped and twisted bottles and jars, gruesome souvenirs of the tragedy of earthquake and fire. The sidewalks tilt crazily uphill and down, the houses rise, steep and narrow, like cliffs along a gorge, and suddenly, over a doorway, there is an electric sign—and Caesar's.

Tom Morton led the way down the flight of steps to the basement dining room, and Nancy followed him, with a quizzical glance at the little tables, the group of entertainers in the far corner, and the scattering of diners. The tongues of those diners, the freedom of their manners, was in accord with the nature of an unconventional restaurant—which is to say that a girl at one of the tables sang a snatch of a popular lyric in a voice just loud enough to float across the conversations at the other tables, and a man laid his arm along the back of his companion's chair and fingered the curl that lay at her neck. From the plates, a savory suggestion rose, and Nancy raised her first spoonful to her lips.

“It's good!” she said convincingly; then, remembering, she raised her glass of red wine and looked laughingly across at him. “To your good fortune, Tommy, your stocks and bonds—the fairy gold we're here to celebrate!”

Around them the tables slowly filled. There are no shaded candles at Caesar's, no blue flames under copper pans. The courses come direct from the kitchen, and because of their savoriness, one lingers. A fat waiter strolled among the tables, singing bits of grand opera. Some one threw him a coin—half a dozen followed in a clinking shower upon the tiled floor. When one rolled under an empty table, he stooped and extracted it with infinite care; his face beamed, but his breath came gaspingly.

Later a girl sang. Her yellow hair was rolled tightly across the back of her head, her blue eyes were unskillfully smudged to shadows, and her red lips too careful in their curve. As she

sang, she cast languishing glances among the diners, stopping here and there to speak between the lines; and when she came to the table where Tommy and Nancy sat, a perverted sense of humor prompted that she sing at him. A healthy color rose under the tan of his cheeks; Nancy teased him with demure glances. And then the girl moved on.

"She's pitiful," said Nancy softly. "Think of being in such straits! She'd the look of a street gamin in her eyes—as if she'd bite a coin to see if it were good——"

"She probably would," said Tommy. He had not enjoyed the experience. "The money thrown her is the biggest part of her salary, I expect. You'll see her start the dancing later in the evening. The moving pictures put chorus girls out of business, and they turn to this cabaret stunt. That waiter chap has a pretty good voice. I don't think much of the girls'."

"There's another," said Nancy. "She's behind the piano—you can't see her from where you sit. She's pretty, dark, and demure looking." The last phrase lingered on her lips suggestively. "At a meeting of the Y. W. C. A. the other day—— Did I tell you I'd taken up social work, Tommy? We're establishing a home for girls, a sort of boarding-house home, you know, and I noticed some posters warning girls against coming to the city in search of work. They're putting them up all over the country, because so many girls are coming out, now that the exposition is drawing crowds—and, of course, there isn't work for all of them——" She let the sentence drift to an uncertain close, a meditative pity waking in her eyes.

"More grand opera," said Tommy.

The stout waiter lifted up his voice with the announcement in the "Troubadour's Song," and the clink of china and glass and the subdued murmur of

laughing voices formed an unfaltering accompaniment.

"By Jove!" cried an applauding voice at the close, and many hands pattered their approval.

"Do you know, Tommy, what this cooking reminds me of?" asked Nancy in the interval. "It's like New Orleans cooking—I've been there for the carnival, you know. They give you the best things to eat, and this——" She broke off suddenly, her eyes going past him. "Now the other girl is going to sing. She's pretty, Tommy—you'll see in a minute. She'll walk around among the tables as the first one did, won't she? She's very different—small and dark. She isn't made up as the other was—she's very artistic looking." Some one at the piano struck the opening chords of a song. "She's standing by the piano, Tommy——"

Over the close little room the music floated with unexpected freshness, as if some one had opened a window and a breath of dewy, grass-scented air had drifted in from Heaven knows where. Grass-scented air was a piquant thing at Cæsar's. More than one diner turned in his chair to catch a glimpse of the singer.

"Why—it's 'Loch Lomond'!" cried Nancy softly.

Tommy only nodded. The girl's voice was a thing of wonderful appeal in the haunting cadences of her song. One listened for it across the noises of the restaurant, and, listening, felt the pain of unfulfilled longings quicken. Tommy's thoughts were not of the girl into whose hands he had given his destiny that afternoon.

"Don't try to see her—wait. She's coming this way now. Think of 'Loch Lomond' in a place like this!"

Between the tables she came, with the chorus of the old Scotch song upon her lips—a small figure in a lavender gown, almost nunlike in its severity, long-sleeved and cut in a modest point



And then, with the emblem of Tommy's newly acquired wealth in her fingers, and with Nañcy's eyes upon her in frank pity, she raised her head and looked at Tommy.

at the neck. Her dark hair was parted in the middle, brought low over the ears, and fastened in a loose knot at the nape of her neck; and her blue eyes held a note of tragedy that might have been the echo of her song. By some

miracle, she avoided the figures of the diners as she threaded her way among the tables. A man leaned back in his place and eyed her with a smile that twisted his lips and narrowed his eyes unpleasantly, and her fingers groped with a frightened gesture among the large black beads she wore about her neck. The beads had all the effect of a rosary, and her hands, brought into prominence against them, were childishly white and small.

It was Nancy who saw all this. Tommy sat and waited, not impatiently, until the girl should come within his range of vision. She was only a step or so behind his table now, and she lifted her head as she sang, so that her voice came from her white throat with poignant sweetness:

"But I and my true love
Shall never meet again——"

Tommy twisted the stem of his liqueur glass between thumb and finger, his thoughts with the girl who had drifted across his life three years before. The words he had spoken to Nancy were fresh in his mind. He was planning his life empty of the girl's presence—suppose she should come back? The exposition was bringing people from all over the country. Suppose he should meet her in a crowd some day—would he feel the same toward her? He wondered.

With the last note of her song hauntingly clear, the singer passed him and moved out upon the floor amid a flurry of applause. The harvest of coins that fell at her feet was greater than that of the fat waiter or the other girl. One gleaming piece rolled toward the fat waiter, and he set his foot upon it, gazing across the room the while with innocent aloofness.

With a visible effort, the girl turned in acknowledgment, a wave of color sweeping over her face as she stooped for the money flung her. Moved by the

tugging at his heartstrings, out of a sudden impulse, Tommy flung his with the rest—a small golden coin that slipped from his fingers in the exuberance of his emotion and, rolling across the floor, struck the leg of a chair and glanced back to his feet. Slowly the girl stooped—so near him that he could have touched the drooping head.

And then, with the emblem of Tommy's newly acquired wealth in her fingers—fairy gold, Nancy had called it—and with Nancy's eyes upon her in frank pity, she raised her head and looked at Tommy; just a glance that flashed from numb endurance to recognition and the still white pain of humiliation. Then she was off to the other side of the room, with the second verse of her song upon her lips.

The thing was between the three of them. There had been no break in the program, so far as the other diners knew. But on the floor at Tommy's feet lay his golden coin; across the room a girl sang with her heart in her throat and a vision of Tommy before her eyes; and at the little table Nancy and Tommy faced each other like people who have seen a ghost. For Nancy knew. She had seen the girl's face—"a little white face with big eyes and a pointed chin"—she had seen Tommy's face as he had recognized the girl, and she realized the emotion that, like lightning out of a clear sky, had struck the two. Things happen like that in truth that is stranger than fiction. Perhaps it was only such a moment that could have shown Nancy how much she loved the man she could not marry now. Because she was bred for emergencies, her voice was quite casual when she spoke to Tommy—very softly:

"We must get her away. How lucky we came, Tommy! She must have been quite desperate—like the girls we were speaking of a while ago. I'll take her home with me."

At the light that leaped into his eyes,

she smiled—a dry, cynical little smile that Tommy did not see. It was, after all, merely an act of Christian womanhood to shelter this girl whom Tommy loved—had loved and did love, in spite of three wasted years and numerous foolish flirtations.

"For the broken heart, it kens
Nae second spring again."

The singer came no nearer to them, but the words of her song carried the ache in her heart and in those of others. The ache in Tommy's heart drew itself in lines around his mouth, but Nancy faced the situation bravely, with clear eyes and steady lips, after that one wry smile. The time called for quick thought and action, and she supplied both. An obsequious waiter bent to fill the glasses, and she questioned him.

"The young lady who sings so charmingly—has she been here long?"

"It is her first evening. Madame is pleased? She will do even better, I think, when she is more used to it—with other songs—when madame comes again—"

He smiled ingratiatingly, waited a moment for further comment, and moved away.

Swiftly Nancy planned. Under spur of the menace of the girl's surroundings, it would have been the man's way to take her out of the place in the face of angry protests from waiters and proprietor, but the woman's wit planned more skillfully.

"We mustn't bungle this one chance out of a million, now that it's come to you, Tommy," she said, and she directed while he scribbled a few words on a card and sent it to the girl, paid his account, and prepared to part. The other girl and the fat waiter were upon the floor by that time, dipping and turning among the first of the dancers, but the girl whom Nancy and Tommy sought had disappeared.

A big gray car was at the door. They

waited in the shelter of it for five dragging minutes that might have been as many æons of time.

"Something has happened. I'm going back for her——"

Tommy's voice was hoarse, but almost before the words were spoken a little figure in a dark cloak came from a basement door adjoining the one through which they had come, and, seeing them, faltered. It may have been the sight of Nancy; it may have been the ache of the years she had tried to fill with ambition when love seemed frustrated; most probably it was the consciousness of the danger from which these two had come to rescue her, the danger she had not fully realized, in her desperate longing to earn and attain. Some one of these things made her falter as she crossed the pavement, but Tommy was there, and the street was not so dark but that she knew the light in his eyes for that before which all other lights grow dim. And Nancy was there with her hand outstretched; the touch of Nancy's hand was very soft and caressing. She must have guessed the tightness in the girl's throat, the mist before her eyes, for she said never a word, but laid her arm, big-sister fashion, across the slender shoulders and drew the girl with her onto the cushions of the gray car.

The car moved under Tommy's hand, moved faster and sped upon its way out of the narrow street to broader thoroughfares. The wind of their passing fluttered against Nancy's cheeks, and in it were the tattered remnants of things that might have been and were to be—shreds of facts and phrases.

"One chance in a million—in a million—— Chance in a million——" sang the wind in her ears.

By her side, the girl sat very still, her eyes upon the dim outline of Tommy's head; and Tommy drove like one inspired.

How They Succeeded

By Virginia Middleton

Author of "Making Over Mark," "Lucre and the Lady," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY LAURA E. FOSTER

NOWADAYS, when every store worthy the name has a department of welfare work; when every institution where girls are employed in large numbers is equipped with all sorts of educational appliances; when classes in salesmanship are a part of the day's routine, and hospitals, rest rooms, gymnastic instruction, nurses, social mentors, and all other aids to well-being, physical, mental, and moral, are as many as the lures spread for customers, one might think that a perfect race of young working women had resulted. But the girls' club which the members of the *Débutantes' League* conducted last year seemed to disprove the comfortable hypothesis.

Something was the matter, even though the *Débutantes' League* added its efforts to those of the stores and offices, and conducted classes in sewing and dressmaking for those who were awkward with the needle, classes in cooking and house managing for the girls whose careers as wage earners had begun too soon for them to become adept in domesticity, and dancing classes and singing classes and drama classes. There still seemed to be lacking in the club a spirit of ambition, of aspiration. In spite of all the training and exercise, a good many of the girls slouched. They slouched mentally as well as physically; some people say that the two are invariable concomitants, and that the mental slouch always induces the physical, and vice versa. Obviously some sort of a tonic was needed.

Considering the situation, one of the leaders had a bright idea. Telephone directory in hand, she ran through the list of women who had made amazing successes of their businesses or professions. It was a much longer list than it would have been ten years ago. It was a more diversified list.

"I've got it!" she cried. "We'll have 'Ten Evenings with Successful Women' this winter, and we'll pledge every one of those successful women to tell the girls how they have achieved their success. If anything will put starch into the girls, that will. It's like seeing a body of well-trained troops march by—one's own shoulders straighten, one's own head goes up, and one steps out with a purpose."

The other directors of the league agreed that it was a fine idea. But who, they wanted to know, was going to induce the ten successful women to come down and tell the girls how they became successful?

"Pouf!" The originator of the bright idea blew away difficulties as if they had been thistledown. "I'll get 'em. There's nothing a successful person really loves quite so well as telling how she became successful—that's why they are generally such bores in ordinary society! But it makes them invaluable for such a scheme as ours. Watch me!"

They watched her, and at the end of two weeks they saw that she had her list of speakers ready and assigned to their dates. For efficiency experts could



"So you want to know how I made a success of my career?"

well afford to take a course of lessons from the breezy young members of débutante leagues and other organizations of young women coming with unspent energy to the task of making over the world.

The first of those whom this particular energetic young woman corralled to serve as object lesson and inspiration to her club girls was a woman manager—one might almost say *the* woman manager, so many are the stars, near-stars, and companies whose destinies she directs, so many the dancers whose toes twinkle under her care, so many the authors whose manuscripts she

chaperons, so to speak. And this is what the manager said, looking gloomily upon the group of girls out of a pair of the coldest, shrewdest eyes that ever sized up a situation:

"So you want to know how I made a success of my career? Well, I'll tell you. I'm not in the least afraid that my method will be adopted by enough of you to make you dangerous rivals and put me out of business. I've worked."

She glared at the girls until the more nervous among them giggled hysterically. Then she went on:

"How many hours a day do you suppose I work yet? Mind you, I'm supposed to be a success! I'm supposed

to have won my position, and some people might think it secure enough to take care of itself. And, mind you, I'm not a young woman, and I might be justified in thinking I had earned a rest. Rest!" She snorted disdainfully at the idea. "I work fifteen hours a day. I'm up at five o'clock most mornings, and have three hours' work done when you girls are yawning your way to the elevated and the subway stations. That's the only secret I've had. I've worked early and late. I've gone without vacations. Why, even now, well established as I am, I wouldn't dare leave my business two months, or when

I came back, I wouldn't have it! You needn't laugh—it isn't a joke!"

She eyed them all with a look of deep disfavor. No one could ever accuse the chief of all the woman managers of being a genial person.

"And I'll tell you what's the matter with you girls and with almost all girls who either have to work or delude themselves into thinking they want careers. They don't know the meaning of the word 'labor.' Girls come and want jobs in my office. They would like a job that they can attend to in their home in the forenoon, and they really don't want to work after four in the afternoon! I know what they want—they want something that will bring them in a handsome profit while they sit around all day in a kimono!

"There isn't such a job in my office, or in any other office in the world. There is no success ahead for the girl who puts anything before her work—whether it's the leisure to sit around in wrappers, or dances, or beaus, or anything. Mind you, I don't advise all girls to put work ahead of leisure and beaus and dances. I'm only telling those who want to be successful in business that business must come first.

"Most girls don't want to be successful in business. They want, very naturally and properly, to have a good time and then to get married. Well, from what I've seen of marriage"—the greatest of woman managers is a spinster, and she spoke with sardonic satisfaction—"that's a job, too, to which they will have to give all their attention if they expect to make a success of it!

"People sometimes write fairy stories about me, attributing my success to my ability in sizing up character, in forming judgments, and all that sort of thing. That's all nonsense. I'm a poor judge of character, I'm constantly making mistakes in judgment, and I'm successful because I work, as I said, fifteen hours a day, and for no other reason.

If any one would like to ask me any questions, I'll try to answer them. But I have told you all that I know already."

No one wanted to ask her any questions. They were all depressed by the great woman's manner, as well as by the relentlessness of her rule for succeeding. So the meeting broke up into doleful little groups about the lemonade bowl, and only one girl dared to murmur, in a whisper:

"I bet she fibbed."

The next week, as an offset to the gloom engendered by the woman manager, the club leader produced a young playwright whose charming comedy had been running for over a year, rendering her the enviable recipient of one of the largest incomes outside of steel circles in the United States. The girls were greatly cheered by her appearance, for she was young and fresh, she wore pretty clothes, and she looked at her audience with eyes beaming with friendliness, instead of giving them the hostile glare of the manager person. But when it came to the rule for success—

"Of course," she began deprecatingly, "I suppose I have a special little gift, or knack, or whatever you call it. I can imagine things, which, when they are written down, it seems to please people to read or to watch on the stage. I didn't give that gift to myself, I didn't gain it by my own endeavors. But having had it gratuitously bestowed upon me, I have to work very hard and carefully to keep it, to develop it. After all, a little talent like mine—and I dare say even a big genius like Shakespeare's—has to be cultivated. It's only a seed in the beginning. I dare say the great geniuses cultivate theirs unconsciously; but the smaller talents have to cultivate their seed very deliberately, watering it with experiences, so to speak, giving it lots of the sunshine of thought. And apart from that sort of cultivation, we have to work very hard indeed."

The girls looked at her a little skeptically. It was difficult to believe that anything as light and airy as her comedy was, even in part, the result of that dingy, almost sordid, thing, hard work. But she went on:

"For example, I have found that the best time to work is in the morning. One's mind is fresh and rested then. Then, if ever, one has energy and a certain vividness of imagination. So, although I am supposed to be my own mistress about my hours, I save the morning always and religiously for my work. I don't allow any other interests to intrude until after I have spent four hours in thinking about my work and working on it.

"I don't even read the morning paper to discover the condition of the fighting armies; I don't even read my mail to see if I am invited to the nicest dinner and dance that ever were. I don't think about my clothes, and, of course, I don't think about the wonderful bargains advertised in yesterday's paper to be on sale only until twelve o'clock. I think about my work and nothing else, as far as is humanly possible. I'm a slave to whatever idea I happen to be developing at the time. And that isn't the worst of it. I see you think it is bad enough, but it isn't the worst."

She paused impressively, and looked at their sober faces with a twinkle in her eyes. It was easy to see that they found her rule for success very depressing.

"The worst of it is," she announced firmly, "that I have to be just as careful about my evenings as I do about my mornings. If I go out to a dance, say, and don't get home until one o'clock in the morning, am I fit for work when I get up? I am not. If I go to the theater, and afterward to a little supper, and have a very gay time talking and laughing and getting excited, am I fit for work at eight o'clock the next morning? I am not. Now, as you see,

I'm not hopelessly old, and I like to dance, and I like to go to the theater and to the little supper afterward, and I like to exchange all sorts of argumentative and gay talk with all sorts of people. But when I'm working on a book or a play, I simply—cut it all out, as my brother, who is given to slang, is in the habit of expressing it.

"For, of course, I like my success better than I like any of these other things. Indeed, it's my success that gives me my chance at the other things, when I take my little between-plays, between-books vacations. People care a lot more about having Miss So-and-so, the successful author of This-and-that, as a guest than they care about having Miss Nobody-at-all! I'm awfully sorry—I wish I could tell you that the way to succeed in whatever you undertake is merely to rub a fairy ring or a fairy lamp, as Aladdin did. But I haven't found it so."

Then she sat down, and the girls, a little less downcast than on the previous week because she was young and friendly and smiling, gave her uncertain little smiles in return for hers, and again had recourse to the cheering lemonade bowl.

If they doubted what she told them, if they were inclined to think, as some of them said, "that she laid it on too thick," they had a chance to revise their opinions in a few days, when the papers contained the announcement of her engagement. For when she was interviewed as to her wedding plans, she told the reporters that she hadn't any; that she was leaving all arrangements to her family, because she was too busy correcting the proofs of her new book to spend time on such matters as trousseaus and "The Voice That Breathed O'er Eden."

The next who came to instruct and inspire was a woman who had found the goose that laid the golden egg in a tea room. She had by this time a whole

chain of them in the shopping and the matinée districts of New York. And by what most housewives would regard as no less than a miracle, in not one of the whole chain is the coffee ever weak or the custard scorched or the mayonnaise curdled or the pastry soggy. Moreover, by another miracle, the rooms are all restful to the eye, the air is always fresh and sweet, the surroundings tasteful. And by a third miracle, perhaps the greatest one of all, the waitresses always seem as fresh and untired as if they were waiting for pleasure and not for hire. But there is no miracle at all about it, according to the proprietor.

"If any one had told me twelve years ago, when I first came to this city," said the lady briskly, "that I would come to be known as a successful business woman, I should have laughed. I had no business training at all. I knew only two things—every comfortably well-off girl in my part of the country knew those two things—how to keep a house clean and how to cook. That knowledge was all that I had to sell when the time came for me to make my living. But I knew those two things thoroughly. You couldn't fool me as to whether the dusting had been done this morning or yesterday, and no poul-



The meeting broke up into doleful little groups about the lemonade bowl, and only one girl dared to murmur, in a whisper: "I bet she fibbed."

try dealer could hand me out a cold-storage chicken and persuade me that it was fresh killed and dry plucked.

"Well, with just that equipment and no other, I got a job in another woman's tea room. I kept the books and overlooked the kitchen work and made myself generally useful. You see, she had capital, and she had also the hunch that tea rooms were promising investments; but that was as far as she went. She was an absentee manager, and absenteeism is an awfully risky thing. In her case, it led first to trouble with her help, then with her merchants and

finally she was willing to sell out by the end of a year. I didn't have the money to buy the business outright, but we made a dicker, she and I, so that I was able to undertake the tea room in about half the space that she had given to it."

She smiled at them all broadly.

"Now, if I had been the same sort of a tea-room proprietor that she was, I should have been back home now, living with my brother's family and doing the mending and other hateful chores for my keep. As it is, I'm sending a nephew to college. For if I had made a failure, I had no capital to fall back on. But I didn't run the tea room that way. For six months I was my own cook, my own bookkeeper, my own buyer, and one-third of my own waiting force. Work—that was what did it! I used to put up jellies and preserves in the evenings, during the season for that sort of thing, on a little three-burner gas stove back of the dining room. I used to get up as early in the morning as any marketman in town and go down to Washington Market to be sure of fresh supplies. Whenever I took a day off, which was only about every other Sunday, I used to take a trolley ride out in the country. What for?"

She paused as if for guesses, but none came.

"Yes, of course! Partly for fresh air and for the sake of resting my eyes on the sky that you can never see in New York without breaking your neck; but also for the sake of bringing back from the woods the decorations for my tables—the branches of pussy willows, the little ferns, the autumn leaves, the crimson and bronze blackberry leaves that cling to the brambles almost all through the winter. I worked. And I never stopped working. That's the reason why I have half a dozen tea rooms now.

"And that's the reason why I have a contented force of workers. You see,

I know all about it! I know how long it takes to do things, and I know exactly how tired one gets doing them. So I keep up my standard, and at the same time I make every due allowance. I tell myself that, whereas I had a great incentive, for the business was my own and the profits my own, my girls haven't that incentive. So I make allowances for various things that a woman who had never worked with her own hands would find it hard to overlook. And so they keep cheerful, and we are all quite happy together.

"But that's my rule—work. You see I haven't any talent, any extraordinary ability. But I had a good constitution, and I was willing to put the success of the tea rooms ahead of everything else. I suppose you would rather have me tell you that by making a few passes in the air and pronouncing an incantation, success might be attained. Maybe it could, but I never found it out."

The girls confided to one another that there was something dreadfully monotonous about the discourses, or, at any rate, about the moral of the discourses. But the leader of the league insisted that she could already see a stiffening of the carriage that seemed to betoken a stiffening of the moral fiber.

The next who came to point out the path of success was a woman who earned more than ten thousand a year as buyer for the jewelry department of a big New York store. The girls gave it out as their opinion, beforehand, that she was probably a relative of a member of the firm, or the widow of an independent jeweler, or some one with a specially prepared way to success. But it turned out to be otherwise.

"I left school," she told them quietly, "when I was fifteen years old. I had to go to work, for my father had died and my family was poor. I got a job in a department store in Boston, which

was my home. It was as sales girl in the jewelry-and-leather department. It wasn't a vast position, for the store was a small one compared to those we have now. In addition to the buyer for the department, there was only one other person employed in it—a saleswoman who had been there some time.

"Well, I hadn't been there three weeks when she fell ill. It was summertime, and trade was not heavy. So the buyer, the manager for the department, decided that he could get along with only me to help out. He gave me all the instruction that he could, for the sake of the reputation of the counter. Well, I was little more than a child, you see. And I had all the child's pride in responsibility, and all the child's ambition to show myself worthy of the responsibility. The result was that I worked like a little Trojan—if any of you know how little Trojans work!

"My family laughed at me. It seemed absurd for a child to be so consumingly curious about all sorts of uninteresting matters, such as how gold was mined, and where platinum was found, and how hides were tanned. But the laughter was kindly, and so it did not discourage me or make me ashamed. Sometimes grown people's laughter does have that effect upon the very best impulses of a child.

"I got my older brother to take me to leather factories. I used to spend evenings in the public library, studying, studying, about gems. Perhaps it all seemed overdone to my elders. After all, there seemed little real connection between the jewelry counter of the department store of that period and a knowledge of the properties of jewels and the world's sources of supply of gold. But I kept on.

"Of course, I learned all about our own stock that I possibly could. When late summer came—the head saleslady being still sick—it was suggested to the

buyer that he would need to employ an older sales person while he went abroad for his Christmas stock of novelties. You can imagine my pride and delight when he said that I was able to take charge of the department in his absence, and that all that was needed for it was an assistant for me. I think I was the most elated fifteen-year-old in the entire Bay State that day. And, of course, the promotion and the praise increased my determination to make a success of my work, to know it thoroughly from a to z, and to put it ahead of everything else.

"That's what I have been doing ever since. I don't mean to say that I haven't had other interests in the twenty-five years since I began my business career. I have managed to get married since then, and to raise a little family. But I never gave up my work. It's easy enough, I find, for a woman to keep house and to attend to her business, if she only has a system. Without a system, of course, she can do neither. Without a system she can do nothing, I might almost say. You can't keep house successfully without one, you can't run a business without one, and, of course, you can't do both without one.

"I put system ahead of even energy. I've known women who have worked hard—as hard as I did—but who have attained nothing like the comfortable success that I have attained. The reason was always that they had no system. They never made a plan of what they meant to do, and what they had to do, and then followed the plan to the exclusion of everything else.

"You see, when I was fifteen, my plan was to know how to buy jewelry and how to sell it. I worked and studied to that end. I might have worked just as hard trying one week to learn all about silks, and the next all about books; and this month looking toward being a saleswoman, and next



So one meeting at least broke up in a gust of hilarity instead of in the usual gloom.

month toward being a moving-picture actress—only we didn't have moving-picture actresses twenty-five years ago! But all that unplanned energy would have been wasted, as far as results were concerned. System and hard work—those are my rules for success. If I knew an easier rule, though I assure you I don't, I am half inclined to believe I would not give it to you, because, though you may not credit it, it is working hard and working with a system that gives you the most pleasure in the long run."

The girls were rather relieved when they saw that the next person scheduled to set their feet in the path of success was an eminent woman caricaturist. She, they thought, couldn't sing the same old song, couldn't chant the same old refrain, about hard work. She would have to admit that, given a certain amount of talent, there were short cuts to success. But when she came into the hall, one of the girls, who was employed in a bank building, recognized her. They talked together for a few minutes, and when the club member joined her associates, they all wanted to know how it happened that she knew the artist.

"It seemed that she didn't know her, really, but that she had met her at the bank steps that very morning, which happened to be a slippery, windy, sleety one, struggling with an unruly umbrella, a hand bag, and a sketch book. The club member had taken pity on her and had held the umbrella over her and had guarded her hand bag while she had drawn a lot of meaningless little lines in the book.

"I don't know what she was doing," said the club member, "but she was real sweet."

It was something of a disappointment to the other girls to learn that an illustrator whose income ran well into the thousands was not lying abed comfortably on a cold, raw, windy morn-

ing, having her chocolate brought to her by an attentive maid. But the illustrator was explaining the circumstance in her opening remarks.

"I'm doubly glad to tell you girls all I know about getting on in the world, since I find that one of you helped me to get on this morning. I had a story to illustrate for a certain magazine, and one of the scenes that I was to draw was laid at the steps of an old-fashioned bank near an elevated road. You might think it would be easy to make up an old-fashioned bank and to add an elevated structure, but I have never found it easy to make up anything. I had to telephone half an hour to find where such a bank was, and then to get up and go out and see how the shadow of the elevated fell upon it, before I could do my drawings.

"It wasn't a particularly nice morning for the venture, and I don't know how I should ever have managed had it not been for one of you girls. She will bear me out in saying that it isn't easy to be an illustrator, since that is what illustrating means; at any rate, it means that to me.

"Of course, to begin with, it means a certain talent, a certain way of seeing things; a certain gift of making your fingers record the thing as you see it. But after that it means work, work, work. It means keeping your impressions true by actual observation. Why, do you know, one year I had to illustrate a funny volume on bridge whist? At that time I had never played a game of whist. I didn't know anything about cards. I didn't know how women's faces looked when they were absorbed in their play, or when they were angry with their partners, or pleased when they were capturing prizes. I didn't know how they held their cards.

"So what did I do? I joined a bridge class, and through eight solid weeks I went twice a week to that class and

played bridge and watched the other women play bridge! You may think that playing bridge was fun, but it wasn't to me. I hated it. But at the end of the time, I knew how to draw the pictures, and I drew them. Work—everlasting, painstaking work—that's the only way I know of to succeed. And that's such a doleful, disappointing

thing to say that I shall not say it again, but draw all your pictures if you'll let me."

So one meeting at least broke up in a gust of hilarity instead of in the usual gloom. Which may have been the reason why the lesson at last began to take effect. Or it may have been that conviction was finally born of iteration.



OUT OF THE RUT

EVERY day we hear some new instance of women's success in filling positions long debarred to their sex or in supporting themselves in some novel and original manner. Some of these undertakings involve serious responsibilities, like the position of city attorney, which a woman holds in Los Angeles, or that of first secretary to a legation, which a woman fills at the Norwegian legation in Mexico. Our own Commissioner Davis, whose splendid work is the pride of the suffragists and the wonder of every one else, is another case in point. She has recently appointed women to two important positions hitherto held exclusively by men—that of resident physician in the workhouse, and that of superintendent in charge of the women prisoners there.

A good many cities now boast policewomen. In Liverpool, England, one was recently made inspector of the criminal-investigation department of the Liverpool police system; and another, in Chicago, a newspaper item tells us, took a revolver in her hand for the fourth time in her life the other day and nonchalantly walked away with the gold medal in the target contest of the sportsmen's show. She hit the target ninety-two times out of one hundred tries, seventy-five feet away; and five out of those times she hit the bull's-eye.

A woman, Miss Mary R. Campbell, is associate director of Chicago's new psychopathic laboratory; and another, Mrs. May Pierce van Zile, is giving a course in eugenics and the care of children to over a thousand women yearly at the Kansas State Agricultural College.

Mrs. Blanche Lucas, of Oklahoma, newspaper woman, oil operator, and expert on the State's laws, recently became campaign manager for her husband, Frank B. Lucas, who ran for State auditor on the Democratic ticket. In 1911 Mrs. Lucas made a compilation of the insurance laws of Oklahoma, and has kept it up to date ever since.

Miss Chaplica, a young Polish woman, is at the head of a party sent by the Oxford Anthropological Society to study the tribes of northern Siberia. She has already published a book on western Siberia.

We might go on almost indefinitely recounting the interesting, useful, and unprecedented things that women are doing to-day, and doing well. It almost looks as if we should have to coin a new phrase, and instead of "the eternal feminine," refer to "the ubiquitous feminine."

A Livery Man

By Carolyn Wells

Author of "Patty's Romance," "Anybody but Anne," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY MAYO BUNKER

JANET ALDRICH had been brought up to the belief that the first duty of women is to be tall and slim and fair, like the Lady Jane in the "Ingoldsby Legend." These things being accomplished, she next set her mind to becoming dignified, stately, and correct. To be educated and talented, of course, went without saying.

But it is ever the case that when certain qualities are overcultivated, others, perforce, dwindle, peak, and pine. So Janet's sense of humor was undeveloped, her interest in romance was casual, and her appreciation of sentimental poetry was a minus quantity.

Entirely as a matter of course, Janet became engaged; and, owing, doubtless, to her lacking sense of humor, her choice fell upon Curtis Fenn, an erudite gentleman of wide and scholarly attainment in the field of antiquarian research.

Fenn had been brought up in the same beliefs and ideals as Janet, and, therefore, their betrothal was—well, it would have served as a model for Lord Chesterfield and St. Cecilia, if those estimable characters had cared to become engaged to each other.

Their love-making was not ecstatic; it was marked by a calm, unruffled elegance of demeanor that suited the temperament and disposition of both. He gave her a ring of astonishing brilliance and beauty, and, having gently placed it where it belonged, he kissed her hand with exquisite grace, and then, after a half-questioning look into her eyes, im-

printed a courteous kiss on her patrician lips.

The engagement was to last six months, her mother said, and his mother agreed. Indeed, the two matrons were more interested in the plans and paraphernalia of the wedding than the contracting parties.

As for them, they had each landed the best catch of the season, so why take thought for the morrow?

"We are very happy, aren't we?" Janet would say, with an intonation meant to carry conviction. "No silly emotion or rubbishy sentimentality."

"Yes," Fenn would agree. "I saw Betty Gray and Dick Corey together at the clubhouse this afternoon, and, my word, Janet, they acted like a veritable 'Arry and 'Arriet! I am truly thankful you don't show your affection for me to all the hilarious populace!"

"Wretched form!" agreed Miss Aldrich. "I was first attracted to you, Curt, by your perfect manners, and you have never once disappointed me."

"I should hope not, in that respect," and Fenn's handsome face showed his distaste for expressed emotion. "But I hope we can always make each other happy, Janet."

"Of course we can. We have tastes too much alike for it to be otherwise. I love to read really worth-while stuff, and I shall study all your work, until I know as much about your subjects as you do yourself."

"Good girl! That will be fine!" and Fenn smiled approbation at the earnest



"Oh, there you *are* spooning!" and the child looked curiously at the couple.

eyes raised to his. "And for recreation?"

"Outdoors, whenever possible. Golf, tennis, polo games, walking, motoring—all that. And on rainy evenings, our own fireside and our books and study together, with bridge or chess on occasion."

"That's a just-right program! You're a girl in a thousand, Janet! Your beautiful, clear vision will be helpful and delightful to me."

Entered Lally, a flapper of fourteen, and a neighbor.

"Spoonin'?" she inquired pleasantly. "I won't stay a minute. Just ran over on an errand for mother. What's the matter? You don't look a bit embarrassed, either of you. Now, when sister was engaged——"

"Don't be bad-mannered, dear," said Janet lightly. "Run away, now, and come on your errand some other time."

"Oh, then you *are* spooning!" and the child looked curiously at the couple.

"That will do, Lally," said Janet, a bit sternly. "You may go now."

Lally went.

"Insufferable kid!" remarked Fenn in an uninterested way. "Janet, I have here the translation of that strange inscription. Would you care to see it?"

"Yes, indeed! When did you get it?"

"Only to-day. It is most enlightening. See, it is, as I supposed, the same hieroglyph——"

And for an hour the two pored over the ancient Egyptian characters and their translation.

"Why aren't you and Mr. Fenn more lovery?" demanded Lally, when she one day found Janet alone, reading on the shaded veranda.

Calmly Janet laid down her book and turned to the girl.

"Lally, dear," she said, "I'm going to read you a little lecture. First, you mustn't show such inquisitive interest in the private affairs of older people, and, second, you must know that nice people don't make an exhibition of their affection before others."

"Oh, does Mr. Fenn love you harder when you're alone, then? *Does* he, Janet? What does he *do*? What does he *say*?"

The flushed, pretty, eager little face was so naïvely in earnest that Janet checked the words of reproof that rose to her lips.

"Child," she said in her kindest way, "those questions are not right for you to ask. Personal matters must not——"

"But I want to know, Janet! I want to *know*! Why won't you tell me? I won't tell. I *love* to hear about lovers!"

"Lovers never tell those things, dear, and it isn't nice for you to ask. Some day you will know for yourself."

"Deed I shall! Oh, Janet, I'm going to be loved by a lovery man! I just know I am! He'll worship and adore me, and he'll *tell* me so every minute that he is with me! Even if not always in words, he'll *look* at me as if he wanted to eat me up!"

"Funny child!" and Janet smiled indulgently.

But after Lally had gone, Miss Aldrich sat thinking a long time. And the burden of her thoughts was a strange one; it was: "As if he wanted to eat me up!"

She turned back to her book. It was a magazine. Idly drifting through the pages, she read a few lines of verse. It was the sort designated by her as sentimental rubbish; yet, notwithstanding the fact, she read it over again. This was it:

CREATION.

God made an awful lot of things—
Some summers, several thousand springs,
The morning and the afternoon,
The sky, the mist, the sea, the moon,
The south wind and the new-mown hay,
The mountain brook and ocean spray.

And then there are some things, you see,
That God made specially for me—
Red roses, yellow daffodils,
The shadows on the purple hills,
A cobweb pearled with morning-dew,
A certain shining star—and You.

Rubbish, to be sure; sentimental, to be very sure. And yet it struck a responsive chord in Janet Aldrich's heart.

She felt a little ashamed, as if caught *en deshabille*, and yet the lilt of the thing so pleased her that, after a furtive glance about, she read it again. A whimsical idea twinkled in her mind that she would pretend that Curtis Fenn had written it to her, and she would see how she liked it. In the light of that inspiration, she read it again—and liked it immensely. Liked it so much that it was deep disappointment to awaken to the fact that Curtis not only hadn't written it, but couldn't write such a thing as that, and, moreover, wouldn't want to! No, it was the work of one Jared Rand; and though that seemed a prosaic name for a poet, somehow she liked it better than if it had been Percy Sylvester or something of that kind.

That evening she showed the lines to Fenn.

He read them, and Janet waited to hear his cynical and scathing denouncement of them. But evidently he deemed them beneath the dignity of a worded comment, and his half smile of contempt adequately brushed them aside as unworthy of an instant's thought.

"But isn't it rather a pretty idea?" Janet persisted, with a touch of color at her own forwardness.

"Pretty idea! My dear Janet! It's merely a string of hackneyed sentimental terms, a rosary of cheap love beads strung on a thread of twaddle! You don't mean to say you *like* it!"

"No! No, of course not! I was just fooling, Curt. It is awful rubbish. Do you know Jared Rand?"

"Never saw the name in print before. Probably a first effort of some callow college youth. I'm surprised that you noticed the stuff."

"Only because it is so absurd. I'm glad, Curt, that you're not given to that sort of thing."

"No, thank Heaven! Now for our chess game."

A leopard may not change his spots, but we have never been told that a leopardess is similarly restricted. Indeed, the feminine temperament is so imbued with the principle of mutability that no change in its demonstrations may be regarded as unexpected.

And so, though the impulse toward "rubbishy sentiment" may have been ever latent in the mind of Janet Aldrich, it had been so ignored and unrecognized that it had practically not existed. But something had changed all that. And now, for some inexplicable reason, she learned by heart—yes, literally by heart—those foolish lines of Jared Rand's, and, though hiding it from Fenn, under the guise of correct cooing of regard for his calm self, she reveled, when alone, in thoughts that could be described by no other terms than those found in the "Thesaurus" under the head of "romantic." And the

not unnatural tendency of these successive spasms of thought was to make the reserved, repressed Miss Aldrich timidly wish that the equally reserved and repressed Mr. Fenn were less so.

Like—something or other—that "grows with what it feeds on," this attitude of mind deepened, until Janet freely confessed to herself that she did wish Curtis were more emotional, or, at least, more—well—in Lally's foolish phrase, more lovery. An absurd wish, to be sure, and even her mild sense of humor made her smile at the mere thought of Fenn's being that! But the wish became an obsession, and made her restless.

And then the next month's magazine brought another of Jared Rand's poems. It was titled "Insensibility," and it twaddled thus:

They tell me that the day is fair,
With blossoms springing everywhere;
I do not know, I cannot say,
For thou, my love, art far away.

They tell me that the birds sing sweet,
That brooklets ripple at my feet;
I do not know, I cannot hear,
For thou, my love, art nowhere near.

They tell me that the sky is blue,
That hills take on a purple hue;
I do not know, I cannot see,
For thou, my love, art not with me.

Now, be it known, by this time Janet Aldrich's softening heart had become as a sponge to absorb Randian sentiment. It was June, or some such month, and the novel sentiment, set forth in such exquisite lyricity, sank into the pulsating warmth of said heart until she was suffused with a definite affection for Curtis Fenn and an overpowering desire to give it oral expression.

She tried.

"Curt," she began a little nervously, "you didn't care for the other bit of Rand's I showed you, but don't you think this rather worth while?"

She handed him the magazine, and,



"Lovely! My dear Janet! What a word! Pray do not connect it with my attitude toward you!"

with a courteous, if bored, air, he read the drivel through.

"Do you *want* me to like it?" he asked politely, as he handed back the book.

"I want you to say what you think," she returned a little shortly.

"So? Then, I think that the English might be better chosen in the line, 'The birds sing sweet,' don't you?"

"Oh, Curtis, how disappointing you are! Don't you think the—the sentiment—is——"

"Sentiment! Janet! This from you?"

"Yes," and her cheeks flamed redly. "You may as well know the worst! I do want more sentiment in my life."

"And you read magazine doggerel to get it? But of course you are jest-

ing. Yes, we should introduce more sentiment into our reading. Suppose we make an exhaustive study of Tennyson's poems."

"Suppose we *don't*! Oh, Curtis, can't you *see*? This thing of Rand's may be doggerel, may be utter rubbish, but it has the human note—the sense of warm, everyday, lovery affection——"

"Loverly! My dear Janet! What a word! Pray do not connect it with my attitude toward you!"

"Indeed I won't!"

And though Miss Aldrich didn't flounce out of the room and slam the door physically, she did in her mental conception of the eternal fitness of things.

Now, Fenn being the accepted arbiter of her destiny, Janet had no wish to combat his arbitrations, and she did not again obtrude upon his unwishful attention the poems of Jared Rand. But none the less did she gloat over them in private, and, like a shielded hothouse plant, her understanding and appreciation of the personal note in one's love affair waxed exceeding great. Air castles rose to astounding heights and glories in her hours of reverie. Always Fenn was the hero, but a Fenn so incinerated in love's fire that he was a mere glowing coal. For Janet's high-calibered mind easily supplied all necessary air-castle building material not fully provided by Rand's poetry.

Then the midsummer number of the ubiquitous magazine gave up this:

KNOWLEDGE.

I know it now—and, knowing, love
This love that came for good or ill;
More glorious than the morning sky,
More golden than the daffodil.

Your love for me—I know it now,
Impassioned, tender, pure, and true.
My love for you— Ah, darling heart,
It frightens me—my love for you!

Janet read it with shining eyes. And the oftener she reread it, the brighter

her eyes shone. And then she took a mighty resolve.

"I'll try Curt once again," she told herself, "and if he snorts at this, well ——" And she frowned in the manner known as darkly.

"Snorts" was not a usual word in Miss Aldrich's vocabulary, but its use on this occasion shows how she rated Fenn's opinion of the new poetic gem. So far had she become apostate from her former faiths and ideals!

"Rhymed rubbish!" was his comment, but he looked at her a little curiously. "And not very well rhymed, either," he went on. "Should have had first and third lines rhyme, as well as second and fourth."

"Oh!" murmured Miss Aldrich explosively. "That's all *you* know about it! This is *real*, Curt! The man who wrote that *meant* it! What did he care about seconds and fourths? He realized *love*, a thing you don't know the meaning of—not the least little spark of a glimmer of its meaning!"

"Do you?"

"If I do, it's not because of *your* teachings!"

"Jared Rand's, then?"

The words were inoffensive, but the sarcastic smile was unbearable. And yet—he was Curtis Fenn, and she was engaged to him.

So she laughed lightly, turned the subject, and made herself adorably charming to his cool and critical taste.

But that night, locked in her room, she wrote a letter:

MY DEAR MR. RAND: Your poem, "Knowledge," is adorable. No, I am not a silly "summer girl"; I am a dignified young woman, engaged to be married. Do you mean those things that you write, or are they all made up? I *must* know. Please pardon the fact of my typing this note, but I want to keep my identity unknown. Will you kindly send a reply to

ROSALIND BLAIR.

Janet typed this not very able composition in her father's office and added

the address of a school friend in New York. She sent it to Jared Rand, in care of the magazine that printed his lines, and then she waited an answer.

It came:

MY DEAR MISS BLAIR: I understand—and I am in complete sympathy with the mood that prompted your note. Indeed yes, the things I write are very real—perhaps that is why they are not more technically correct. Could I see you? Dare I ask a tiny interview, alone, soon? I can tell you many things, for—I understand. Hopefully,
JARED RAND.

The note, like her own, was typewritten—signature and all. Miss Aldrich gasped. She, *she*, Janet Aldrich, drawn into a clandestine meeting with a man unknown to her! Yet that was just what she had proposed to bring about.

Calmly she wrote a reply; briefly she told him to call on her on a certain evening, when, she said, she would be in the rose garden of her own home.

Quite with her eyes open she did all this; quite unconcerned what Fenn would think of it, and equally indifferent as to what she thought of it herself.

At the appointed time, she awaited



And as she waited, gracefully posed on a marble garden seat, toward her came slowly—Curtis Fenn.

her caller in the dusk, warm-scented garden. She wore a soft white gown and allowed herself the unwonted coquetry of a trailing rose-colored chiffon scarf. Quite surprisedly she learned that she knew just how to wear the scarf.

And as she waited, gracefully posed on a marble garden seat, toward her came slowly—Curtis Fenn.

Janet was too well poised to show discomfiture or confusion. But the soft fragrant air, and the mood of her own heart, gave an unusual tenderness to the voice that said, "Is that you, Curt?" And then she stood, gracefully, to greet him.

Fenn came to her, quite close. Slowly he put his arm around her; firmly he drew her to himself; and, holding her in the very embrace she had daringly dreamed of, he whispered:

"It frightens me—my love for you!"

"Curtis! You *darling!*" breathed the ecstatic Miss Aldrich.

"Janet! You *love!* You honey blossom off of a peach tree! *Did* you know that I wrote that Rand drool or *didn't* you?"

"Oh, I don't know whether I knew or not. *Darling!* I thought it *couldn't* be and yet—well, I couldn't get anybody into the air castles but you!"

"Angel! Tell me you love me! Again!" And Fenn hungrily kissed the rose-sweet lips.

The conversation was kept at this level for a long time, with appropriate

action. They assured and reassured each other that each had suppressed all demonstration of real affection out of consideration for the other's supposed dislike of it, but—never again!

"And you really wrote those wonderful poems!"

"Oh, they're nothing. How could I help it, with *you* for an inspiration?"

"Curt! I'm so glad that, after all, you are a lovely man!"

"And I think that's a great little old word! I didn't mean it when I jumped on it. It's just exactly—right!"

"Look at me!" and Janet's tone held a new flit of suddenly acquired and very pretty authority.

Fenn looked at her.

"Perfect!" she sighed. "You look at me just as if you wanted to eat me up! And you do, don't you, darling? It's all true, isn't it? You *do* love me?"

Filled with sheer delight at being in a position to play his ace of trumps again, and in a blissful certainty that his fears would be duly allayed, Fenn breathed thrillingly:

"It frightens me—my love for you!"

A MARCH PROMISE

BUT yesternoon, the wide, fair sky

Roofed us with azure overhead,
And rosy orchards in the sigh

Of dainty winds their ruffles spread.

To-day, rough clouds of monkish gray

Buffet the bluebirds high in air,

And Jonquil, born a sunnier day,

Shakes piteously her yellow hair.

Spring seems a wayward lass—untrue

To her best self; of teasing mind

To nip her peach boughs, frilled anew,

And fright her birds, her kin and kind.

Ah, but we hold her earnest pledge!

Her green, green seal she brightly sets

On wood and field, and at their edge

She writes her name in violets.

RHEEM DOUGLAS.

A Sheaf of New Leaves

By Anne O'Hagan

Author of "The Healing of the Hills," "Diagnosing Linda," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY ROBERT A. GRAEF

MYRTLE, leaving Mrs. Gresham's luncheon as soon as even a limited sense of courtesy would allow, instead of walking home went rapidly in the opposite direction. A jumble of motives drove her. She said to herself, for example, that if she walked more, she might attain to that slenderness which was one of her hostess' chief assets; and that there was a chance—a bare chance—of meeting Kimball Dodsley, if she was fortunate in timing her passing of Herschel Hall, in which were housed all the scientific departments of the college. It was three o'clock, and he had advanced chemistry from two until three.

At any rate, she told herself vindictively, by a walk she would defer return to her own home, with its horrible lack of seclusion. She wanted—unless, of course, she should happen upon Kimball—to be alone; and privacy was a word not included in the healthy vocabulary of the Fletcher house. Even Professor Fletcher, to obtain enough of it to enable him to correct Latin examination papers, had to retreat to the college. The room that was mocked by the name of "father's study" was no more sacred from the onslaught of the females of the abundant and friendly family than was the sitting room or the sewing room.

Poor father! How had he stood them all these years?

Myrtle tried, for a second, to coerce a feeling of pity for her father into her heart, but it was doubly futile. In the

first place, the stout, robust figure, the ruddy, handsome, unscholarly face of her father, with bright blue eyes always twinkling beneath his great mass of iron-gray hair, refused to lend themselves to the rôle of martyr; and in the second place, Myrtle was far too deeply absorbed in her own sorrows to spare any genuine sympathy to another's, no matter how real.

Pauline Gresham! How it had gone against Myrtle's desires to eat her excellent luncheon that day! Though not, alas! against Myrtle's appetite. She had succumbed to cream-of-asparagus soup and scallops disguised in a rich and wonderful sauce, and to all the rest of the fattening menu, straight through to the meringue glacé at the end, as weakly, as completely, as if she were not in the habit of resolving once a week to live upon crusts and lemon juice, and thereby to become the sylph whom men—whom Kimball, at any rate—seemed to worship. She believed that it was all part of Pauline's insidious campaign against the peace and happiness of the young girls of the Hillharbor College set to keep such a good cook, and to serve such delectable, irresistible concoctions of sugars and starches.

The intriguing woman! At her age, too! It was outrageous! She must be quite thirty-five—well, thirty-two or three, anyway! Paul Gresham was ten, and little Wilhelmina just eight—the age that she, Myrtle Fletcher, had been when her cup of pride and happiness

had been filled to overflowing by her important position as flower girl in Pauline's wedding procession, twelve years before. Pauline must have been twenty-one then. Oh, decidedly she was *old*, disgracefully old, to be making a fool of Kimball Dodsley!

There came Kimball now! Down the steps of Herschel Hall, bareheaded despite the December frostiness in the air, overcoatless—the absurd boy! The dear, careless, good-looking boy! Myrtle snuggled deeper into her furs. She could hide the sudden quivering of her lips at sight of him in the friendly black fox. She hoped that her eyes did not beseech him, entreat him, to look lovingly upon her. It was all very well for a woman like Pauline Gresham to gaze pleadingly at men, as if her life's happiness were bound up in their opinion of her, or as if she had some profound secret of melancholy and of sweetness to share with them; but that style of expression was not becoming to a round-faced blonde; and, anyway, a girl ought not to be obliged to look pleadingly, intensely, at her affianced husband. The best tradition forbade it.

"Oh, hello, Myrtle!" Kimball saluted her, as they almost collided at the foot of Herschel Hall steps. "Where are you off to? Mrs. Gresham's dove luncheon over? How was the girl from Baltimore? Do you suppose they have all gone yet?"

"The luncheon was a great success," replied Myrtle, with a clearness of enunciation that would have alarmed a more attentive listener. "As all of Mrs. Gresham's things are, of course. The girl from Baltimore talks twenty to the dozen, and has a lisp—she'll be a mad hit with the freshmen and the older members of the faculty. Not, I suppose, quite such a one with you more—er—scholarly and introspective men. And"—her enunciation became simply a marvel of clarity—"I have no doubt the luncheon party has dispersed by

this time, and that you will catch Mrs. Gresham just in season for a cup of tea and a page from that silly little green book"—she nodded toward a volume projecting from his pocket—"while the Baltimorean rests up for to-night's dance at the Sigma Lambda house."

Myrtle had not had the least intention of addressing Mr. Dodsley in this fashion when she had seen him on the steps; but jealousy is an unforetellable disease, and the wisest students of its symptoms can never prophesy what the next manifestation will be. Kimball looked at her with a faint air of distaste.

"Grouchy again?" he said, with an almost husbandly manner of bored indifference. "Sorry. Don't let me interrupt your walk. See you later——"

And he was off across the campus, toward the row of professorial residences straggling down the hill. Myrtle, as she resumed her plodding ascent of the road before her, hated him with an intensity even deeper than that with which she hated Pauline Gresham. She would break her engagement that very night! She would cease to be the laughingstock of Hillharbor College! She would assert her dignity, her maiden pride! He had never loved her, never! Last June, it had been merely moonlight and the scent of roses and the sound of the violins throbbing out "The Blue Danube" waltz, and the weakness of his convalescence from typhoid, and the thought of farewell to Hillharbor, and all that sort of thing. It had never been love.

Well, she supposed she was really lucky to have found it out in time. Better to be a jilted girl than a deceived, unhappy wife. If he hadn't come back this year for postgraduate work on that fellowship, and if Mr. Gresham hadn't accepted the call to Hillharbor from Oberlin at the same time, everything might have gone on smoothly. She would have been married next June,

Kimball was to have an instructorship in physics right here at home—and— Oh, well, she could go away, and become a war nurse. Both of them couldn't stay in Hillharbor, of course; and, as she had no job there, she had better go. She could spend what was left of her trousseau money for a course in bandaging; some one had told her only the other day that bandagers were at a premium in all the war hospitals.

Probably her father and mother and her sisters and her brothers and her cousins and her aunts, and the whole overflowing, interfering, affectionate tribe of the Fletchers, would try to thwart her plan. Perhaps even Kimball himself would protest against being dismissed; her leaden heart gave a little leap within her breast at that possibility, but she summoned common sense to her rescue. He was absorbed in another woman—a woman, said Myrtle vindictively to herself, old enough to be his mother! He would rejoice at the cutting of the little bonds that held him to her—Myrtle.

She wondered if Will Gresham suspected his wife's duplicity. Certainly he did not look like a happy man, these days. He had never looked any too happy, as far as Myrtle was able to reconstruct his more youthful aspect from her recollection. Change his cos-



She could hide the sudden quivering of her lips at sight of him in the friendly black fox.

tume, and before one would appear in the very flesh the Puritan judge, as relentless in his view of his own conduct as of another's—and as relentless in regard to another's as to his own! A handsome man he was, in that ascetic, stern fashion of his; as handsome in his way as Pauline was lovely in hers. But it was not a joyful sort of good looks—not like her dear dad's, not like Kimball's.

Pauline *was* lovely! Myrtle, plump, pretty, with features nicely modeled for a plump, pretty, rosy, maternal maturity, acknowledged the older woman's

more ethereal, more elusive loveliness with a groan. Tall and slim, with a figure that forever melted, all unconsciously, into the lines of a Tanagra statue; with dusky hair that lay lovingly about her ivory-pale face like a cloud hovering at the edge of a radiant sky; with big, beseeching gray eyes, forever entreating something of all the world—from women as well as from men, from children as well as from the grown. For what did they beg, those eyes? Happiness? Love? The opportunity to be kind? Ah, that was their hateful charm—that mystery of their meaning!

Well, whatever Pauline's eyes meant, whatever they asked, whatever they besought Kimball Dodsley to give her, she, Myrtle Fletcher, was not going to go on in this impotent, unhappy style any longer. She had been miserable all the autumn, for Kimball had seemed changed from the very first. She was going to end it. She might wait until after Christmas—if she could control her pride and her temper and her heart-break so long—but not one day after New Year's would she put up with this situation!

It would be, perhaps, a little mean to upset every one's plans for Christmas. Kimball's sister, for example, was coming to spend the holidays with the Fletchers. Mother Fletcher had just had a set of brushes ornamented with a wonderfully convoluted monogram for the young man whom she expected to have for a son-in-law; she might feel some diffidence about bestowing them upon a young gentleman who was to be nothing at all to her. And the little girls had been crocheting and working inutilities for him. Yes, if she could bear it so long, she would defer the final rupture until after the mocking holiday festivities were past and the New Year bills were in. Then—

She drew a deep breath and started down the hill.

II.

Yes, there was no question about it. Kimball nodded his head solemnly. No question at all. Mrs. Gresham—ah, Pauline, Pauline!—was not happy with her husband. He had divined it ever since he had met her. Those wonderful gray eyes of hers were the eyes of a woman who carries a secret grief in her heart. He laughed aloud suddenly; he was thinking of the blind stupidity of a community that could not perceive the mysterious appeal of those eyes, and that customarily spoke of her only as "an awfully pretty woman." Pretty! Oafs like that would have called the Tragic Muse pretty!

Myrtle had been right in her prognostications. He had found Mrs. Gresham—Pauline—alone. As he had approached the house, he had seen the two children go off with their nurse. Mrs. Gresham—Pauline—herself had opened the door to him. He had told her that he was bringing the book of which he had spoken the night before—the *vers libre* things. Did she remember? For it had seemed to him, for a shadowy, disconcerting fraction of a second, that she didn't know what he was talking about. Then her face had lightened. The veil had been withdrawn from the lovely eyes; the soft lips had curved in that enchanting little smile of hers; and she had said that of course she remembered, and had led him into the library.

She was doing "final Christmas things," she had told him, and he had watched the play of her slim white fingers among some colored scraps in her workbasket, and had thought of all the ladies of old days who had sat with their embroidery hoops, their tapestry frames, and had wrought the deeds of their knights and lovers far off in war and foray, while the pages sang at home. He couldn't quite decide whether he would rather be her knight, battling

afar for her glory, with her dear glove against his heart, or her page, lolling at her feet and watching her eyes while he strummed a lute.

And then from among the colored scraps she had dislodged a time-table, prosaic, modern, utilitarian. It was marked heavily across two lines with a red pencil. She had looked at him guiltily as the thing had come to light.

"I wonder how this came here," she had said, with a rather touchingly blundering attempt at guile. For the stub of red pencil with which she had marked the trains still lay upon the table. And then she had thrust the thing deep into one of the silk pockets with which the workbasket was lined, and had asked him to read while she went on with her Christmas things. On the whole, he had decided then, he would rather be the page at the lovely medieval lady's feet than the knight battling far away for her dear sake.

Myrtle, he reflected, would be quite incapable of understanding the sentiment with which Pauline Gresham inspired him. Would be? Was! Myrtle had already displayed, in an unmistakable, crude—almost vulgar—manner, a completeness of incomprehension that was hard to bear. She could not accept the ideality of the relation to which he aspired. Of course, they had never actually mentioned the possibility of any relation between him and Mrs. Gresham beyond that general social one subsisting throughout all the faculty set. But Myrtle had succeeded in making her disapproval as plain as if they had had the subject on the table for discussion.

After all, the medievalists had been tremendously right in their conception of man's attitude toward woman, woman's attitude toward man. Man wanted a creature whom he could serve in reverence, as well as a creature whom he could love in common, human gladness. He wanted his inspiration, as well as

his companion. Dante had needed his Beatrice even more than he had needed that other woman whose name now eluded Mr. Dodsley. Petrarch had needed Laura. If only Myrtle—dear, round, rosy Myrtle—would see in his admiration for Pauline Gresham no emotion antagonistic to her, but one in which she might even share, how discerning that would be on Myrtle's part! How much he would appreciate such discernment!

But no—Myrtle made it perfectly plain that she had no sympathy with his feeling. Myrtle was prepared to be the exacting wife, monogamistic spiritually as well as corporeally. Well—a man's spirit was his own, not another's; not even his wife's. He loved Myrtle; he wanted her in his home, at his table, in his nursery; he wanted her out of doors, spreading picnic suppers in the grove, lending a hand with the paddle when they canoed. He wanted her for all the close-knit uses of common life. But that should not, he swore, preclude his having an admiration, mystic, reverential, and yet protective, for Pauline Gresham.

He told himself that such a feeling no more militated against his love for Myrtle than a romantic Roman Catholic's feeling for the Virgin Mother militated against the sincerity of his earthly affections. How wise the ancient church was, by the way, to provide so harmlessly and innocently for man's universal need of an object of tender veneration!

Did Gresham treat her badly, he wondered, with an involuntary clenching of his hands. Certainly there was sadness in those beautiful, mysterious eyes. Certainly she had started nervously when Gresham had come in, interrupting the *vers libre* session. Certainly there had been a curious intentness in Gresham's scrutiny of her. Could the solemn ass be jealous? And of him, Kimball Dodsley?

His chest expanded, and his head went up in the dusk.

Oh, of course, that was nonsense! Gresham *couldn't* be such a fool! Yet—who could say? A jealous man is an insane man; and if he—Gresham—had the guilty consciousness that he had not made her happy, he might be prepared to read amiss her momentary happiness with another. There was no question about it—Will Gresham had looked queerly at Pauline, his wife, when he had interrupted their reading that afternoon; and Pauline had seemed embarrassed by the look.

Of course, he, Kimball Dodsley, must do nothing, nothing at all, to increase her unhappiness, her burden—that mysterious melancholy which looked out from her velvety gray eyes— Hang conventions, anyway!

She had promised to sit out two dances with him to-night at the Sigma Lambda dance. He didn't dance, and he had resisted all of Myrtle's prayers that he should learn to disport himself upon his toes. He was a little sorry, now; Pauline had said that she loved dancing—"one floats away from oneself," she had explained. He had told Myrtle that he would come to the Sigma Lambda affair only in time for supper and for taking her home. She would be astonished to find him there early in the evening.

Oh, well! Perhaps she would decide



"I wonder how this came here," she had said, with a rather touchingly blundering attempt at guile.

that he had come on her account. He liked to see Myrtle at dances, anyway. She enjoyed them so frankly. She was such a pink, hundred-petaled rose of a girl in her finery. Obvious, of course—very obvious! But dear and warm and sweet and joyous. Perhaps she would decide that he had come on her account.

If Gresham didn't make Pauline happy— And he did not! He did not! She had not the eyes of a happy woman—nor did Gresham himself have the face of a happy man. They should separate—and then—

He indulged himself in a brief dream of a perfectly respectable *menage à trois*, in which a mutually loving husband and wife shielded an Elect Lady from the world's harshnesses.

But Myrtle would never understand. And, of course, there were the Gresham children. It would not be simple, the solution of the problem. However, upon one thing he was resolved—he would serve Pauline Gresham with single-minded devotion, despite all obstacles in the shape of husbands, fiancées, crude, vulgar societies, incapable of understanding the subtle, the delicate—

And to-night he was to sit out two dances with her.

III.

"Will you do me a favor to-night, Pauline?" Mr. William Gresham asked his wife, after he had closed the front door upon the departure of Kimball Dodsley.

"Of course," she answered, flushing a little beneath his searching gaze.

"Wear your emeralds."

"Oh!" Pauline's monosyllable was queerly blank. The flush died from her face. She looked fixedly at the workbasket on the table. Then she raised her eyes, to find his still fixed upon her. "Aren't they a bit too grand," she asked, "for a little fraternity dance?"

"I have a great fancy to see you wear them," he insisted.

"Oh, then—of course." There was a constraint in her yielding, a condition. Then she began again. "But I was going to wear pale blue. They will clash, I think—"

"Wear white."

"Very well." She sighed, and forced the contents of her workbasket into a space too small for them. "I wish Anna would bring the children in—she shouldn't keep them out after the sun has gone. The luncheon was a great success, Will. I think Doris is going to be as popular with the girls as she is sure to be with the boys."

"I had forgotten about the luncheon. I'm glad it went well. Where is Doris?"

"Resting up for to-night." At the thought of the evening, a shadow flickered across her face for a second. Then it vanished. "There come the children!" she cried happily.

The late-afternoon nursery rites were all duly observed—the supper of bread and milk, the conscientious Gresham interpretation of a bedtime romp, prayers, story, good nights—and at the end Pauline sought her husband, who had departed for his study before the literary and religious exercises.

"Dear, I am so sorry," she said, "but can you possibly manage to chaperon Doris unaided to-night? I—I have been fighting off one of my headaches all day, and it has got the better of me at last. I—I simply can't go to-night."

He looked at her very steadily for a long second. Color flooded her pale face at the inquisitorial quality of that glance.

"I'm sorry you don't feel well," he said stiltedly. "Of course I can take care of Doris. Hadn't you better go to bed at once? You won't do yourself any good by sitting up to dinner."

"That is so," agreed Pauline.

"Are there any partners, already en-

gaged, to whom your apologies should be made?"

"No—oh, yes! I promised to sit out two dances with the Dodsley boy. Tell him I'm sorry, please. Though I'm afraid that's a white lie—I hate to waste a dance by sitting it out. Only he was so insistent!"

"I'll make your excuses to him."

She went slowly to her room, where, later, she received Doris' effervescent condolences, and from which, still later, she waved farewell to a vision in gold and pale green and crystal—a Titania-like sprite whose toes refused to stay upon the ground when she merely thought of dancing.

After the lower-hall door had closed reverberatingly upon this figure, and that of Professor Gresham, whose festive garb mocked the anxious sternness of his face, Pauline rang her bedside bell violently.

"Anna," she exclaimed to the maid who replied to the summons, "I feel much better, and quite ravenously hungry. Please bring me something to eat—quite a lot to eat."

At Sigma Lambda house, Kimball Dodsley, hovering near the entrance, marked, with blank dismay, the arrival of Professor Gresham and his charge. He did not observe that Myrtle and her mother followed close upon the heels of the Gresham party. He received Pauline's message blankly. Finally he managed to say:

"I'm so sorry she is sick. Why, how d'do, Mrs. Fletcher! Myrtle—that is *some* dress!"

The glance that Myrtle bestowed upon him was not grateful. She had overheard the delivery of Pauline's message. She made no verbal response to his greeting, letting her mother's unobservant, friendly garrulity cover her silence. In the dressing room, she startled the maid by stamping her foot and crying aloud:

"I won't stand it! I won't! I won't!"

In her mind, she was saying: "He came to sit out dances with her! He came to sit out dances with her! Will Gresham forbade it—she stayed at home. He came to sit out dances with her!"

And, downstairs, Kimball was gloomily reflecting upon the impossibility of escape until the end of the evening, since Myrtle had caught him red-handed, as it were. Confound these asinine merrymakings!

"Gresham wouldn't let her come," he told himself. "He probably made her a scene because of finding me there this afternoon. Poor soul! Poor, timorous, oppressed soul! Her eyes are looking out from prison bars upon the world of freedom and understanding. He wouldn't let her come because she was going to sit out two dances with me! And now I've got to sit out dances with every simpering miss here—"

He did not, however, sit out any dances with his fiancée. When he approached that young woman with a request for the privilege of putting his initials upon her dance card, she told him gayly, a little metallically, that she hadn't a dance to spare—she was even dividing single dances between insistent claimants. It was a fact which he had the opportunity of observing during the evening. Myrtle was an unquestionable belle. Her popularity at first pleased him, with a patronizing sense of his own cleverness in winning her, and then began vaguely to annoy him. He told himself at last that it was too spectacular to be in really good taste, especially on the part of a girl who was engaged.

Professor Gresham, resigning himself to an evening of distasteful entertainment, heard, beneath the music and the laughter, the gay chaff of the youngsters and the soberer talk of their elders, an inner voice that kept repeating:

"She didn't come because she couldn't wear the emeralds. She hasn't got



In the dressing room, she startled the maid by stamping her foot and crying aloud:
 "I won't stand it! I won't! I won't!"

them. She hasn't got her mother's emeralds!"

IV.

The Christmas holidays were duly proclaimed at Hillharbor College. Each departing train carried off a load of students. Those who remained gave themselves up with whole-hearted zeal to the important work of amusement. Wreaths began to hang before the windows, holly berries to glitter behind the glass. There was skating on the lake; there were dances in the fraternity houses; there was great activity at the

express and the post offices. In the artificial bustle it was possible to avoid soul-searching tête-à-têtes.

Mrs. Gresham and Kimball Dodsley collided at the door of the post office on the afternoon of the twenty-second of December. The lady had not only mailed parcels, it appeared, but had forestalled the delivery of the afternoon mail by the carrier, and was reading a communication with such intentness that she did not see the young gentleman until he blocked her path deliberately.

"Won't you wait while I get rid of

this truck," he begged her, indicating the packages with which his pockets bulged, "and let me walk home with you?"

Her lovely eyes were distraught; she scarcely seemed to have heard him. When, after a second, his words had registered their message upon her brain, she smiled and said that that would be lovely. And she waited in an alcove while he stamped and insured his bundles. By the time he was ready to join her, her face wore again that look of white wretchedness which he had surprised there so often lately.

"The unmistakable look of a woman whose heart life is not satisfying," he said, with angry conviction, accusing Will Gresham in his mind of every kind of failure toward his wife.

When he came to where she stood, she forced the sweet, patient smile once more to her lips. Jove! It was horrible! What actresses women were! What hypocrisy society imposed upon them! Why was it not permitted her to open her heart freely to him—to him, who could reverence confidence; to him, who burned with sympathy? But, instead of opening her heart, she was saying, with forced vivacity, that she had to go home by way of the station, after all—she had an express parcel to pay for. There was a lot of irrelevant stuff about the expressman's not having had scales to weigh something—he didn't pay much attention to her subterfuge. She was going to the station for some other purpose; he knew it, even before she managed to leave him for a few moments, and he saw her at the ticket office.

She had bought a ticket for New York.

Will, she informed him, with great liveliness of manner, had been obliged to go to Boston that morning. He was to be away until Christmas Eve—wasn't it too bad? But, of course, he would be home for the Christmas Eve festivities.

These, in Hillharbor, were all strictly and sacredly domestic.

"You, of course, will be at the Fletchers' that evening?" she remarked, in the voice that thrilled with its unhappiness as a violin string always holds the note of melancholy even through its most joyful music.

Yes, he supposed so. He seemed unenthusiastic about it. She went on, saying something kind about Myrtle. It was like her great-heartedness; it was different from Myrtle's manner in regard to her, which had become positively cattish. Only yesterday she had been guilty of the trite vulgarity of saying, when the serious style of Pauline's beauty had been mentioned, and the vague sorrow of her eyes: "Vague sorrow can usually be accounted for by reference to the digestion." Decidedly, Myrtle was capable of serious grossness of speech.

That excuse Gresham had given for abandoning his home for the three days preceding Christmas—how feeble it was, how ill adapted to withstand analysis! In the first place, he was a member of the Hillharbor College faculty, and he had none of those "business" calls which served other men as warrants to escape their firesides. In the second, no one was really doing any business three days before Christmas. Could it be that it was not an unworthy jealousy that looked out of his eyes at Pauline, but a more unloving spirit still? Was he not only unsympathetic, unsatisfying, but perhaps disloyal as well? Of course, he looked like a Sunday-school superintendent of A. D. 1670, or thereabouts—Kimball hated the type—but that sort of man had frequently been known to be guilty of crimes!

And she was going to New York tomorrow! Why?

He fell to thinking of what a day in New York with her could mean—a day far from the all-seeing, collective eye of Hillharbor, far from its all-pro-

claiming, collective vocal organs! New York always excited him—it was his holiday land. They would lunch in a lovely restaurant, bright, and even a little blatant, with decoration, with spicy flowers on the table, which should be discreetly placed in a corner. There would be a wonderful wine in the cooler, which the most respectful of servitors—respectful to him because of the wise experience he would display in his ordering—would bear reverentially to that table. There would be a very good band, removed, however, from their immediate neighborhood. And all the grandly renowned and the naughtily renowned of the metropolis would be lunching within sight, and he would miraculously know them, and point them out to her; and her sad eyes would brighten with that little look of interest and merriment they sometimes had.

And there would be a *matinée*; and perhaps she would have some errand in a sumptuous shop, where he might wait her pleasure, and perhaps throw in a word or two as to the effect of a hat—black velvet, broad-brimmed, shading her exquisite eyes—or of a wrap—brown velvet, he thought, with gold thread brocading it—and a deep collar of silky black fur. And they would drive in the park while the great city adorned herself with all her nightly jewels; and the lovely eyes would reveal their meanings in soft, unhampered speech, and the anxious look would fade from her face—

By Jove! He would go to New York to-morrow! The spoils of victory were to the daring. He would be in the city of enchantment while she was there. Chance played into bold hands. He had no sinister intentions—he merely wished to be with her, to solace her sad heart, to play the part of the page strumming a lute and luring her to forgetfulness of pain—his lovely medieval lady!

Moreover, Myrtle had been quite impossible for a week.

He would be very guileful. He would go to New York before she went, and he would be, by chance, at the train gate when the morning train discharged its load of Hillharborites on the next day. It might work out amiss—but it might not. If luck favored him, and they met, he could begin by asking her help in selecting a gift for Myrtle. To be sure, Myrtle's gift already lay, neatly boxed in gray *suède*, in his top bureau drawer—a pearl-incrusted heart that had cost a great deal of money. But he could buy her another present. Perhaps another one would woo her to an amiable understanding of his feeling in regard to the Elect Lady!

A sleeping car for New York made up in Hillharbor station, ready to be attached to the express that came thundering through from the North at midnight. Kimball boarded it, and in the easy style familiar to American night travelers, began divesting himself of his coat and waistcoat, his necktie, and the minor portions of his outer attire, in the aisle. Suddenly he dived into the darkness of his curtained berth.

The porter was assisting Pauline Gresham aboard that car; Pauline, unmistakably, despite the attempt at concealment she made in an all-enveloping wrap and a thick *barège* veil.

Kimball began to find life an exciting melodrama.

V.

When the Hillharbor faculty set found itself in New York, it patronized, not the overheated, overdecorated, overcarpeted, overscented, and overbanded hostelry of Kimball Dodsley's cosmopolitan dreams—he always said that it was strange how Hillharborites tried to be as Hillharborish as possible wherever they traveled—but a quiet hotel in a side street, becoming, year by year, farther "downtown." Kimball, feeling



Kimball Dodsley effaced himself against the brick wall of the fly-specked drug store as they passed, as oblivious of him as of the rest of the world.

not unlike a detective of lurid fiction, dogged Mrs. Gresham to the taxi stand, on the morning of the twenty-third, and heard her give the accustomed Hillharbor direction—"The Arlington." He followed to that spot in a more leisurely street car. It would be easy enough to engineer a meeting in the lobby, he thought.

As he turned from signing the register, and intimated that he would breakfast before going to his room, he ran into Myrtle Fletcher.

"Myrtle!" he ejaculated.

She smiled the strangest smile he had ever seen on her pretty mouth—it wasn't a smile; it was a distortion. And her eyes—if a pair of sweet, bright-blue eyes could suddenly become icicles, steel blades, and red-hot pokers, at the same instant, they would look exactly as Myrtle's did then. He felt frozen and stabbed and scorched by them.

"You didn't say that you were coming to the city," he accused her weakly; he knew how weakly the moment he had spoken.

"Did you say that you were coming?" she inquired pointedly. And as he struggled for a telling retort, she

went on: "Don't look so guilty, Kimball. I shan't interfere with you—and Mrs. Gresham. I have a great deal to do, and shall not see you again. So cheer up——"

"Mrs. Gresham!" he faltered, with a pitiful and totally unconvincing simulation of astonishment.

"Oh, don't try to be surprised. She has a room on my corridor, and we met at the elevator as she came up and I down to breakfast. I'll leave you now."

And she left him. He went into the

dining room and tried to formulate a plan of action. Of course, Myrtle thought that he and Pauline had planned a day together—how basely suspicious was the ordinary female mind!—and, obviously, she was prepared to be very nasty. But he must not permit anything of the sort—for Pauline's lovely sake as well as for his own—and Myrtle's. Hang it! He would telephone up to her room, would demand a few minutes' talk, and would set everything straight. He would tell her that Pauline Gresham had not a notion of his being in the city, which was merely the truth, and that he was there to buy her—Myrtle—a fitting Christmas gift, which could be made the truth readily enough. And that they would have a ripping day—luncheon, a drive— Perhaps he could bring her to a state of mind in which she would sympathize with his feeling for Mrs. Gresham. Again the vague vision of a noble *menage à trois* flitted across his mind.

When he stated his desire to telephone to Miss Fletcher, the clerk suavely informed him that Miss Fletcher had paid her bill and had left the hotel. Perhaps the taxi starter knew where she had gone. The taxi starter thought that she had gone to the Women's University Club. Kimball telephoned that unimpeachable resort. Yes, Miss Fletcher was staying there. No, she was not in at present, and had left no word as to when she would be in.

He did not quite dare to organize his day as he had planned it in Hillharbor the night before. He didn't want to outrage Myrtle's feelings too greatly; he didn't want to anger her. He only wanted to keep her in happy ignorance of any vagary of his that might disquiet her. Surely that was the part of true affection! But since that was obviously impossible in the present situation, he wished to placate her. He would like her sympathy in his feeling for the

lovely lady of the sad eyes and the stern husband, but he wanted Myrtle even without that desirable, and, he admitted, most unlikely change of heart.

He did not telephone to Mrs. Gresham's room. He hung about the lobby for an hour or two, and called up the Women's University Club at intervals, leaving his name and a message, with great distinctness, each time.

It was about eleven o'clock in the forenoon when the Elect Lady appeared. She wore the veil of the night before, and she glanced nervously and unseeingly from right to left as she passed from the elevator toward the door. Kimball, standing at the cigar stall, with his back to the lobby, saw her in a mirror back of the counter.

She went through the door, held open by the blue-livered boy of the Arlington, stood for a second irresolutely on the sidewalk, and then walked east. Kimball threw away his cigar and followed her. Where was the dear, sad woman going? Into what danger might she not be running? He would keep her in sight; he wouldn't address her—hang Myrtle's unreasonable suspicions!—but he would be at hand if she needed him.

She moved quickly through the street throngs. She went clear to Third Avenue—not the region for any pleasant Christmas errand, he told himself. His imagination played with a hundred guesses as he kept her in sight in her progress toward the crowded, noisy, dark thoroughfare under the elevated. Perhaps she was ill—had some obscure, slow, and eventually fatal malady, concerning which she kept her husband in ignorance out of high generosity—and her trip to New York—her secret escape from home while Will Gresham himself was away—was to consult her doctor. Perhaps her sadness was due to her knowledge of Will himself, and her visit was to be to her lawyer! Perhaps she was merely here for some lit-

tle Christmas jollity; there were reunion luncheons and things going on. But the neighborhood that she sought precluded the possibility of any of these explanations being the true one. The sort of lawyer and doctor that Mrs. Gresham employed did not live here, and class reunions did not take place in this neighborhood.

She disappeared into the dark hallway of a tenement house, the first floor of which was occupied by a German delicatessen dealer. Kimball went into the shop and bought a criminally large amount of sausage, engaging the amiable Teuton who served him in interminable discourse upon the varieties of sausage. Meantime, he watched anxiously through the window. Fifteen minutes passed, but Pauline did not reappear.

He purchased enough cheap writing paper to last him for a year at the stationer's across the street—having meantime dumped the sausage into a convenient garbage receptacle at the corner—and still she had not come. And as he was buying toilet soap in a fly-specked drug store, he had the excitement of seeing Will Gresham enter the tenement hallway that had previously engulfed Pauline.

VI.

His legs had grown almost stiff from prolonged standing at the corner. A policeman had engaged him in inquisitive conversation. Several mothers had called their children away from his vicinity—there had been a kidnaping on the street a week before, but of course he did not know that. Finally, at one o'clock, Professor William Gresham, occupant of the chair of romance history at Hillharbor College, appeared in the dark entrance to the tenement hall. Clinging affectionately to his arm was Pauline, his wife. The heavy veil was thrown back now, and the pale face was radiant. Those eyes that had seemed

deep pools of melancholy were lit by the fires of sheer joy. The two looked like lovers; they clung together like lovers; they had the oblivion of lovers to the crowds about them, to the traffic of the street, to the laws of Manhattan regulating that traffic. Absorbed in each other, they crossed the roadway casually in the middle of the block, deaf to the curses of motormen and draymen, who escaped running them down only by sudden, superhuman spurts of strength.

Kimball Dodsley effaced himself against the brick wall of the fly-specked drug store as they passed, an arm's length from him, as oblivious of him as of the rest of the world.

"Never, never again, I promise you, Will! I'll never deceive you again!" He heard the unbelievable words. "Oh, it's such a relief to have you know and to have you forgive me!"

"Forgive your divine generosity? Ah, Pauline! But there must be no more of it—never again! They are not worthy— It is my burden—"

Speaking thus insanely, they passed beyond earshot.

Pauline—deceit—generosity—burden—what did it all mean?

He had to know! He must know! He *would* know!

Impulsively he crossed the street. At the door from which had recently emerged the figures of the lovers, he bumped into a gentleman somewhat negligee in attire and carrying a can.

"I beg your pardon, sir," said the gentleman, with sonorous clearness of enunciation.

"Not at all. I beg yours," said Kimball. "I wonder—could you help me? Mrs. Gresham—" Then he caught the name "Gresham" on a dingy card inserted above one of the hall letter boxes.

"Mrs. Gresham? My wife, sir." The gentleman with the tin pail looked at

him with a plenitude of expression upon a handsome, weak, clean-shaven face.

"Your wife? Oh, I see! No, I was not looking for that Mrs. Gresham. But was Mrs. Gresham, of Hill-harbor, calling upon you within a few minutes?"

"My sister-in-law. Yes. You know her, sir?" It was wonderful, the roll of that "sir."

"Very well—that is, I have the honor of knowing her slightly. Did she, perchance, drop her glove?"

"Ah, I see! I do not know. If you will not mind walking up two flights and rapping on the rear door, my wife will make search. I will myself be back immediately——"

Kimball walked up two flights, and knocked as directed.

The door was opened to him by a small siren in a pink silk kimono, which had once been fresher, and a boudoir cap past its charm.

"Oh!" said the siren, snatching the kimono together across the bosom. "I thought it was Hadley!"

Kimball stated his errand, and the door opened widely. He was ushered into a black hall, and thence into a disorderly sitting and bedroom, in which the process of conversion from night to day use was simple. It consisted merely in folding back an oak bed, quite unmade, which promptly simulated a glittering oak sideboard. The glove that Kimball was seeking was not found, but



"What could an *artiste* like me do with babies? They play the deuce with a career!"

by the time the gentleman with the tin pail had returned, and the contents of the pail were discovered to be foaming beer, he was in possession of many interesting facts; such as, for instance, that Hadley Gresham was the most unappreciated genius whom theatrical managers had ever dealt unfairly with, and that Mrs. Hadley Gresham—stage name "Verona Violette"—ran him a close second in genius and unappreciation; that Will Gresham was a fish and a snob and an ingrate—being younger than Hadley, he nevertheless did not pay him the reverence, or afford him the aid, that a younger brother was by nature intended to pay and afford to

an elder; but that Mrs. Will Gresham was a dear—in a milk-and-water way, of course—no pep to her. But she had tried to help the Hadley Greshams from time to time; that much would have to be admitted.

"Her husband is such a skinflint, though—or maybe they don't get so much, after all, these highbrow professors," remarked Verona Violette Gresham expansively—"that she hasn't got much to help any one with. I will say for her, though, that once or twice, when things were lookin' pretty black for us, an' Will was declarin' that it wasn't right for him to do anythin' more—he had responsibilities, an' all that, an' he had warned Hadley, an' it was not right to keep on helpin' us to our own detriment an' that of innocent people—he's tryin' to save for the kids, I suppose he means—why, when he's been goin' on like that, she's been fine. She's lent me her jewelry—she hasn't much, but it's first rate what there is of it—a set of emeralds—earrings, brooch, bracelet, an' pendant, old-fashioned, but real distangy—to help tide over. He made a hell of a row about it when he found out. Say, how can a woman live with a stiff like that? So different from Had—Had's all heart."

She passed a piece of deeply incarnadined chamois across her cheeks and surveyed the result approvingly in a mirror in the top of the oak sideboard bed. Then she laughed.

"I played a kind of mean trick on her this fall," she observed. "I wrote an' told her we was awful down on our luck—an' that was God's truth—an' asked her to do somethin' or get old Stiff Neck to. An' she replied that he absolutely refused to—that he had had heavy expenses, an' all that, an' that, anyway, he had determined to let Had shift for himself—she used classier language, but that's what it boiled down to—an' that she had no income of her own on which to draw, even if she

should want to go against her husband's decision, which she didn't. She ain't got the spirit to breathe without his say-so. Well, I was stumped. But I had an idea." Verona Violette laughed. She cast a sly glance at Kimball Dodsley. "I might as well tell you. I suppose she will, if I don't—you seemin' to be an intimate friend of theirs."

"That is highly unlikely," Kimball forced himself to say.

"Well, he will, then—Groucho the Prof. Oh, I know them solemn owls—they're as full of talk as a nut is of meat if they've got something to gloom along about! It's only about pleasantness that they keep their mouths so tight shut. Well—seem' as you'll hear it, most likely, anyway—I wrote her that I was—expectin'—an' that she'd have to help me."

"Expecting?" repeated the mystified young man.

"Yes, yes!" snapped Verona Violette impatiently. "Don't tell me you've grown to be six feet one, an' all of twenty-three, I should say, without knowin' what a woman means by expectin'! Babies, you great gump! A baby!"

"Oh!" gasped Kimball. And then slowly: "And it wasn't true?"

"Nope; of course it wasn't! What could an *artiste* like me do with babies? They play the deuce with a career! But it brought Sister-in-law Polly's emeralds by return mail. An'"—regretfully—"if only I had remembered to mail her the ticket—so that she could have got them out of hock, when she had skimped enough money out of the housekeepin', an' all that—why, she would never uv known. But I forgot all about it—an', lo an' behold, here she came this mornin' askin' for it. She was goin' to spend her father's Christmas check gettin' them back!

"But before I could find the confounded thing—we've moved twice since I wrote to her, an' you know how

upsettin' *that* is—before I found it, in walks brother Groucho, who was on to her—who had suspected her of disobeyin' an' deceivin'. You should have heard 'em! They talked like a Little Theater play at each other—you know—a yard or two of language to one refined inch of action. 'I didn't want you to be worried an' annoyed, my dearest, an' just when you were so busy with your book, too!' 'It was for your sake, my own. I couldn't bear to have such sordidness come near you.' Sordidness, mind you! I admit we're true bohemians, but 'sordidness' was going some, don't you think?"

Verona Violette moved toward the door to admit her spouse and the foaming inch of beer.

"They're dotty about each other," she said, with her hand on the knob. "Dotty! I ain't felt like they do since before my first marriage. It's grand, but awful uncomfortable."

VII.

Yes, Miss Fletcher had returned to the safe shelter of the Women's University Club. Yes, she had received all the telephone messages. Yes, she was there now, and— Please hold the wire.

"Kim," said Myrtle's voice—quite a different one from any she had used in addressing him lately—"I want to say something to you at once—before you can say anything! No—wait! I am ashamed of the way I acted this morning—I am awfully ashamed. And I'd like to pretend that I came to my senses myself, but that wouldn't be true. It wasn't just decency that made me ashamed, as it ought to have been. It

was— Well, I saw Pauline Gresham and Will together at Red Cross Bandage Headquarters, an hour ago. And they were—well, looking crazy about each other, in their early Puritan style. And so—of course—I am awfully ashamed, Kim, and I shall never, never again—if you can forgive me——"

Myrtle's voice had delicious little runs of eagerness at times.

"Oh, Myrtle, don't! Cut that out! You make me feel a beast!" cried Kimball, from the other end of the wire. "I never thought of it again. It didn't matter. I knew you'd see the utter ridiculousness of it at once. And—Myrtle, I know I've been awfully unsatisfactory for the past few weeks. I've been—worried, distracted—I've been a good deal of an ass, if you want to know the truth! But it's over; and I promise you that it won't happen again. Never, never! What were you doing at Red Cross Headquarters? It isn't your idea of 'seeing New York,' as it may be Will Gresham's, is it? *What!* You little goose! But—they won't take you? More volunteers than they can use? Well, thank Heaven for that! Where shall we have tea? Do you want to help choose your own auxiliary Christmas present? Where shall we go to the theater to-night? Your dad's coming down to do his Christmas shopping early on Christmas Eve? Good! I'll get seats for three. Say—have you ever been to the Little Theater? No? Well—I think I'd like to see what kind of a play— Suppose I try for seats there? Bandage Headquarters! Oh, Myrtle! Promise me—I'll be there in ten minutes with a taxi! Be ready!"



Mary Rose and Old Man Flaherty

By Hildegard Lavender

Author of "Man, Militarism, and Woman," "Leaks," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY E. A. FURMAN

ON quiet evenings up on the farm, the summer when Lawrence and I were sure that in horse breeding lay our ultimate fortune, Bill used to sit upon the kitchen doorstone, and, sending clouds of smoke and of awful odor into the twilight, sweet with the musk of lilac or of rose, used to discourse upon, the peculiarities of human nature as he had witnessed it under many skies. Lawrence sat in frank democracy beside him, puffing a pipe almost as evil as his, and I lurked in the shadows of the kitchen entry behind them, rocking and listening. Actual sight of me always put restraint upon Bill's speech, and that was a misfortune, for Bill was worth overhearing.

He had been a rolling stone. Cuba, Alaska, India, Bulgaria—he spoke of them as familiarly as we of Dobbs' Grain and Feed Store or the post office; the army—armies, indeed, for one gathered that Bill's good broadsword had, whenever financial depression had overtaken him far from home, been unprejudicedly for hire to whatever ruler chose to pay for it; ranches, mines, cities, seas—he knew them all, according to his stories.

Once or twice there had been a swiftly suppressed hint of early college experiences in his tales, but that line he never developed. His language, however, bespoke him educated in more conventional schools than those of diverse experience. We knew, of course, that he was a liar. But however wildly divergent from all possible fact in any possible world his sequence of events

might sometimes be, there was the racy truth of essential character in his narrations. I used to hate to look forward to the inevitable day—a month, a six-month distant—when he would take his amazing knowledge of horses, his volumes of recollections, and his short, jaunty, soldierly figure down our popular drive on his way toward his next adventure. That was what a job was to Bill—adventure; no mere humdrum means of putting food in his stomach, tobacco in his pipe, and a roof over his head.

Lawrence had been to the gate with Mrs. Stebbins, ushering her off the place with heroically concealed joy. He came back by way of the kitchen. I had already sunk down in the entry, exhausted from the long day's work of entertaining that magnificent, that overpowering, woman. Bill was smoking, as usual.

"Great little lady, that, Mr. Saxton!" he remarked pleasantly, with a nod in the direction of our departed guest's chariot, raising a great dust along the road as she clattered home to the children and chores which, she claimed, awaited her.

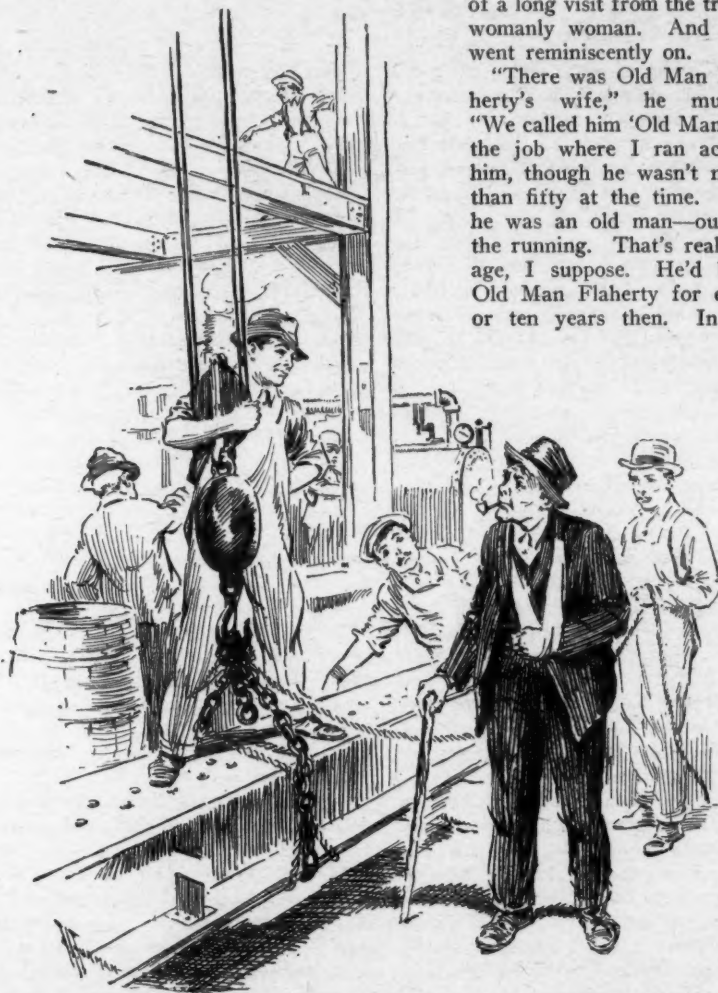
"Great," agreed Lawrence limply, sinking down beside Bill and fishing for his pipe.

"I don't know when I've seen any one so full of character for ten years," said Bill thoughtfully. "She's a born leader, as they say of the politicians. And she seems to think of herself as pure womanly, clinging-viny, and all that sort of thing. Ever notice, sir, that

that is the type of the real overbearing woman, and not the straight-out-from-the-shoulder type, like—saving your presence—Mrs. Saxton, who's so strong for women's rights, but who lets a man have a chance to call his soul his own?"

It was obvious that Bill was unaware of my presence in the square kitchen entry. I was sufficiently interested in Lawrence's reply to keep my proximity unannounced for a few seconds; but Lawrence merely grunted, still weak from the crushing and oppressive effect of a long visit from the truly-womanly woman. And Bill went reminiscently on.

"There was Old Man Flaherty's wife," he mused. "We called him 'Old Man' on the job where I ran across him, though he wasn't more than fifty at the time. But he was an old man—out of the running. That's real old age, I suppose. He'd been Old Man Flaherty for eight or ten years then. In his



"Flaherty used to come around daytimes, when he had his sleep out."



"I've heard that woman tell that poor lame man to go to the grocery store on a slippery night to carry home some forgotten provision, because it was too sleety for Barney's horse to be out!"

time, he had been a great boy, too—the steel-construction gang with which he had worked in the days when he was in the game still told stories of his steady eye and his steady foot when he crossed the slim, dizzy girders and strings half a mile or so up in the air. There was nothing could faze him in his prime—from twenty-five or thereabouts to the day when he became Old Man Flaherty. I'm not boring you?"

"Not at all. On the contrary," said Lawrence peacefully, the strain of Mrs. Stebbins' visitation gradually melting,

his worn spirit gradually attuning itself to the charm of Bill's mellow voice.

"I was with a construction gang one season," said Bill, lightly turning another page in his diversified history. "We did the structural iron for the great Vesuvian Insurance Company Building down near the Battery. Let's see—that was ten years ago. They'll have demolished it for something bigger by this time in New York? Ah, I thought so—of course! Great people, the New Yorkers! Well, here I met up with Old Man Flaherty, the night

watchman of the construction. He had been one of Trenton & Briggs' workmen, as I said, and when he made his misstep one day and crashed down fourteen stories without having the good luck to kill himself, Trenton & Briggs saw him through. It was before the days of workmen's compensations and all the newfangled stuff. And if the girder on which Old Man Flaherty thought he was treading, and on which he had a right to think that he was treading, didn't happen to be there, why, that was a fellow workman's fault, and there was no come-back for the poor wretch, who had to go on one leg for the remainder of his days.

"However, as I say, Trenton & Briggs were white, according to the standards of the trade and the time; they took care of the hospital bills, and they bought Flaherty a fine cork leg when it was discovered that that was what he needed, and not a fine oak coffin and a wreath of white roses. And when he was able to limp around again, they saw to it that he had work. Which wasn't so easy to find as you might think, sir, for Flaherty was an unlettered cuss, and there were no office snaps for him; and he was forty—and a man has ceased to be adaptable at forty, don't you think? He had known only one thing, and he couldn't do that with a cork leg and a disabled arm and a little something the matter with his ribs. So they put him on the pay roll as a watchman, and he was a blamed good one. A conscientious fellow, and not soporifically inclined. He didn't sleep enough, as a matter of fact. Thought instead—and didn't have one of the minds that are meant to think with. So he found it hard work, and it kept him awake. Well, I didn't wonder when I came to know—

"I suppose it was the stories they still told of his sure-footedness in the old days that first drew me to Flaherty. He was often around the job—have you

ever noticed that the disabled workman is far more apt to haunt the scene of his labors than the murderer the scene of his crime? I'm always running across old wrecks who can't keep away—pathetic old boys hobbling about and looking, with patient envy, on the youngsters who are doing the work they used to do. And Flaherty used to come around daytimes, when he had had his sleep out. So I got to know him. And gradually I fell into the habit of dropping around at his little shed of an evening, and smoking a pipe with him and warming myself by his little can of charcoal. And eventually I was invited to his house. I went, too—I had grown fond of the old fellow. It was a little, cottagey sort of place in the Bronx. And there I met the missus. And after that, curiously enough, Flaherty had no more reserves with me. He seemed to think they'd be useless—that I already understood.

"She was still a handsome, healthy-looking piece of meat when I met her—rosy, unwrinkled, firm-fleshed, black-haired. She kept an awfully neat house, too. It was pleasant in its over-varnished, red-plush, prosperous style, just because it was so sparkingly neat, so proud of being the right thing. And the food was good. I went to a Sunday dinner. And the little grape arbor over the kitchen porch was attractive, and the wire-screened white hens down at the foot of the yard looked comfortable. It all had a charm for me, until I found that Flaherty didn't count for one-two-three in the universe as it was represented up there in that neat demesne in the Bronx.

"There was a son, you see—a big hulk, with his mother's type of good looks, of slow wits, of hard heart. And the son—Barney, they called him—was the white-haired boy of that establishment. He ran a grocery store somewhere in the neighborhood. Life was ordered for him. Meals were timed for

him. Dishes were chosen to suit his taste. Old Man Flaherty used to eat his supper standing in the pantry, before he went limping down to the Vesuvian that winter. He found a cold breakfast, or, at any rate, a secondhand breakfast, on the back of the range when he woke up in the middle of the morning. He hobbled out on Mrs. Flaherty's errands. Why, I've heard that woman tell that poor lame man to go to the grocery store on a slippery night to carry home some forgotten provision, because it was too sleety for Barney's horse to be out!

"One night, as we sat down in the watchman's hut, Flaherty suddenly let loose. He wasn't much given to talk—never had been, the men told me, though he had always been a cheerful, friendly, smiling, untroubled soul, in his good days. He opened up with the perennial question of male to male, when they stir the depths. 'Ain't women the dickens?' he asked me. I agreed that they were indeed the dickens, and I waited.

"There's Ellen, now," he went on. "I needn't make anny bones of the matter wid ye, Bill—ye've been to the house an' ye see how it is wid us. Ye've seen wid yer own eyes that the yellow tabby cat behind the stove is ace-high compared to me. Wud ye believe that that woman was the most cherishin' sort of a wife until this—he indicated his leg—'befell me? She was. She waited on me, hand an' fut, the way she waits on Barney now. She was a bit sthricht wid the childer—"

"With the children?" I interrupted him. "I didn't know you had other children besides Barney?"

"Wan other," answered the old man. "Wan other."

"He fell silent, and I was afraid to go on. Flaherty was a man in whom one divined abysses of sensitiveness—the sensitiveness of the inarticulate. I didn't want to stir sorrow to the sur-

face. But after a minute's pause, he went on, with a sigh:

"Wan other—Mary Rose. She—she's gone. No, I don't mean dead; an' God knows I don't mean gone wrong—I cudden belave that of Mary Rose if she came an' told me so herself, wid her own pretty lips. Just gone. She niver got on well wid her mamma from the time she was a little thing; but while I was me own man, an' was workin' an' bringin' in good wages, she wasn't so bad threatened as afther me accident. She was a comely bit of a thing; she tuk afther me own mother, who was like a wild rose to the day of her death, though she didn't die till past sivinty—not pink an' blossomy exactly, but light an' swayin', like there was a June breeze blowin', an' sweet an' gay an' smilin', like it was good to be alive. That was me own mother, an' that was Mary Rose. The "Rose" I stuck on to her name—the Mary was for Ellen's mother—to mind me of me mother."

"He fell into a silence, cleaning out his pipe with great care.

"And your daughter—Mary Rose—went away?" I tried to bring him back to his narrative.

"'Yis. Afther me accident, I hadn't much infloence wid Ellen. I've niver been able to puzzle it out, at all, at all,' he added, with a burst of irritation. 'I've plinty of time to think—too damned much time to think!—an' I think an' think an' think. But I can't understand Ellen. She was—I don't want to seem boastful to ye, Bill, but I'd like yer help in understandin' the matter, an' ye can't give that widout ye know the situation, an' so I tell ye she was blamed glad to get me. I was doin' well; I didn't drink anny to speak of; I wasn't wan to run around wid the girruls, though I liked well enough to swing a leg in a dance now an' then; an' I wasn't bad lookin' before I was maimed fit to throw on the dust heap. An' Ellen wanted me—she wanted me



“‘An’ it was “Hush, ye’ll disturb yer father!” to the childer, an’ “Whist there now! Not so much noise. Yer father’s readin’ his paper,” an’ so on an’ so on.””

more than I did her. I don’t mean I iver disliked her for that; I did not. But I wasn’t bent on mattherimony at all, at all. An’ yet, wan fine mornin’, I was at church wid Ellen, promisin’ to love an’ cherish her all the days of her life. Ellen was always wan to have her own way. An’ she wanted me.

“Well, an’ I had no cause to complain. She was a fine, managin’ sort of a woman—I’ve always thought there must be a touch of the Scotch in her Irish, she does so well by ivery dollar! She kipt the clane house; she was always handsome an’ neat, a fine figger of a woman, an’ a figger a man was proud enough to walk to mass wid, of

a Sunday mornin’. Aye, an’ to kiss on the mouth whin he’d come home of an evenin’. An’ she worshiped me—I tell ye that, Bill—she did, she did! That’s what I can’t make out now. She cooked for me, an’ she dressed for me, an’ she kipt the house for me, an’ it was “Hush, ye’ll disturb yer father!” to the childer, an’ “Whist there, now! Not so much noise. Yer father’s readin’ his paper,” an’ so on an’ so on. She’d even be soft wid Mary Rose, who was a wild sprite of a thing an’ forever annoyin’ her mother, because I said I cudden stand for the wranglin’ back an’ forth. Barney an’ his mother always got along right well, but when-

ever my lad set himself up against me, it was Ellen put him back where he belonged.

"An' then, as ye've heard tell, came me accident. I dunno how Ellen tuk on at first—I didn't know annything at all for a few days. But she made the proper marks of sorrow, I've no question at all, at all. An' whin I was able to hobble home, she had the table set forth wid all me favorite dishes, an' everythin' done the way I liked it. An' Mary Rose—Mary Rose—the old man's voice broke—'Mary Rose was there, thin an' white, wid deep gullies around her pretty eyes from cryin' an' bemoanin' for her father.

"Ellen, afther I had eat an' slept, told me what she thought I ought to do. She thought I should be suin' the company—Trenton & Briggs, or the Vesuvian Company, or some wan—for a big pile of money. I cuddent see it that way. I'd been takin' a chance, an' if anny other man had been takin' it, I'd have called him a fool, an' I'd have said that what happened to him was what he deserved. So I told Ellen I guessed I wouldn't sue anny wan. It was the first time she ever set up her will in opposition to mine, an' I was a little surprised. An' by an' by, whin she said to me that Barney agreed wid her, I asked her how long since she was accustomed to takin' whippersnapper advice in her business. An' I said I hadn't reached that place yet. Barney an' me, we niver really liked each other; he was his mother over again, an' what ye may like in a woman, ye'll not stand in a man. But she answered me that Barney was chief clerk in the grocery where he'd started as delivery boy five years before. Ye'd have thought she was tellin' me he was president of the United States!

"From that day it began—the state of affairs ye've witnessed for yersilf. Always Barney, Barney! Niver Mary Rose an' niver me anny more. Ontil

wan day, whin I get up, I find a note from Mary Rose sayin' that she can't stand it anny longer an' she's goin'. She cried all over the paper, poor girrul, an' it was warted wid the tears. She said she loved me thrue, an' that she cuddent bear her mamma. If I cud have gotten hold of her, I'd have whipped her well for talk like that—but I understood it. She was but sixteen. It was eight years ago. I had meant to make a scholar of her—she liked readin'. But whin I wuddent sue anny wan for me accident, an' whin I tuk the little job the boss offered me, her mamma took her out of school. In the high school she was. As pretty as a wild rose. She put her to work in a milliner's, Ellen did—put Mary Rose to work—

"But didn't you make any effort —" I began, and he stopped me.

"Luk at me!" he cried, with the only trace of bitterness I ever heard in his voice. 'Luk at me! A cripple—a cripple wid niver a dollar in me pocket! Where cud I search? Where cud I make an effort? An' her mother—Mary Rose's mother, my wife, Ellen—read her out of the family. An' her brother Barney said she'd disgraced it, an' need niver darken his doors again. *His* doors, mind ye! *His* doors! An' whin I ast him how long since the doors were his, it was his mother—it was my wife, Ellen—who told me what he was conthributin' to the support of the house an' who asked me what was I conthributin'! *His* doors!

"Of course, I made some efforts. She was such a pretty child. But she was wise to the world, in a way—not like the childer of the rich that knows naught of what is lyin' in wait for thim whin they step out upon the street. An' a good girrul, for all her little flary timpers, an' all her niver tryin' to get on wid her mamma."

"The poor old fellow broke off with that, and I gave up wondering why he

slept so little, why he was able to come watching the job daytimes, like a poor noonday ghost, as well as nights. A man wouldn't sleep much with a Mary Rose gone like that, would he?

"But the thing that puzzled him and worried him most was not Mary Rose's fate—apparently he had some sort of an insane conviction that her native goodness and her native shrewdness would save her from trouble—but the psychology of Ellen, his wife. He brooded and brooded upon the mystery of her changed heart.

"'Twinty years an' more I lived wid her,' he used to say, 'an' nowhere wud ye find a woman more dutiful. All was for me—her keepin' the place like a new whistle for clane-ness, her batin' down butcher an' baker, her scrubbin' the childer till their faces was red an' shinin'. All to be a credit to me. An' her nate clothes, an' her fine black hair—she said she wore them wid pride so that I'd be proud of her. All for me. Even subdoooin' her hate of Mary Rose for me. Did ye iver think a mother cud hate her own flesh an' blood, Bill? My wife did, though she didn't know it, most likely, an' I didn't know it. An' maybe Mary Rose didn't know it. She used to tell me, Ellen did, that I was spoilin' the child, but that was all.

"'Niver till I lost me leg, niver till I



"'Is Mr. Flaherty here?' a trembling, sweet, flutelike voice asked me."

lost me job, did she set up her will against my will, her wishes before mine. An' now look! It's Barney, Barney! If I didn't think Mary Rose might come back to the old place, I'd clear out. But she might come. An' I'd want to be there mesilf. The place is mine, by the same token, an' clear an' free an' in me own name. I've a right there, though it's thrue enough Barney does be payin' all the bills. I wish I could understand her.'

"Well"—Bill blew a long cloud into the dusk, and laughed—"of course, I thought I understood her. I was ten years younger then, and knew much more about women. So I asked old Flaherty questions. After all, had he

ever opposed his wife Ellen's wishes, except about Mary Rose's schooling, and perhaps the title to the house? Of course, it developed that he had not. He was an average, good-natured husband, concerned with his business, leaving the rest of life in the hands of a woman who told him how docile she was, how regardful of his wishes, how subservient to his will. And he believed her. It *does* pay to advertise; he believed that she was a tenderly considerate wife because she kept telling him she was.

"Old Flaherty admitted, after a dazed contemplation of the facts, that this might be so. But still, he said, that theory did not account for her changed attitude now. She had loved him, she had made him the center of her universe; why had she changed at the very moment when he needed her most?

"What she cared for, Mr. Flaherty," I told him in my sapience, "was what many perfectly virtuous females care for—not the individual soul and heart of a man, but success embodied in a male being whom they can annex for their own purposes. She chose you and wooed you and won you, marched you to the altar, and thence to the Bronx, because she saw in you the successful male whom she could annex to be head of her house, father of her children, provider of all that a woman needs. Mind, I'm not for an instant saying that she did all this knowingly, deliberately. Instinct teaches them to do it. And when an unguessable, unforeseeable accident destroys your usefulness in that capacity—she renders to the next successful male whom she can annex to her uses the homage, the rites, once given to you."

"And what did Old Man Flaherty say to that piece of analysis?" demanded Lawrence.

"He laughed, and slapped his thigh, and laughed again until he became choked with laughter and smoke and

had to be beaten on the back. He solemnly assured me that it was almost worth undergoing his wife's contempt to hear it so skillfully diagnosed—or words to that effect."

Bill arose and knocked the ashes from his pipe. He was beginning something about the bay gelding, when I burst forth from the dark entry.

"But Mary Rose?" I cried.

"Oh, to be sure!" said Bill awkwardly. "That is the best part of the story, if you like Christmas cards and valentines. I had forgotten it, though. Why, one night, as Old Man Flaherty and I sat toasting in the air-tight shed, an automobile came slowly through the street. It was snowing lightly, and you could see the harbor lights down beyond the Battery through a veil. And the car—it was a gorgeous one—stopped before the caboose, and the chauffeur gave a 'halloo!' I went out—it was slippery going for lame old men—and such an eager little face as peered out of the limousine.

"Is Mr. Flaherty here?" a trembling, sweet, flutelike voice asked me.

"And I answered: 'He's always been sure you'd come back, safe and sound, Miss Mary Rose.'

"And it *was* she, with a wonder tale of adventure, of 'clerking' it, of singing in mean places, of singing and dancing in places a little better—and by and by of the fairy's wand waving and transforming life. She had become a moving-picture actress in Los Angeles—not a headliner, but rich beyond the dreams of Bronx avarice, and miraculously wholesome and sweet, as her father had predicted.

"I suppose the crowning bitterness of Mrs. Flaherty's life was experienced the day the pair of them started back to California. Quite a fairy story, isn't it, Mrs. Saxton?"

And yet poor Bill had thought his psychologizing the core of interest in the tale! No wonder he's a failure!

"Why I Like An Exciting Town".

By Mary Patterson

Author of "Another Queer Thing About Parents," etc.



DECEMBER 2.

They generally read right after dinner and don't talk at all, or else they keep on with the things they were saying at dinner and

that you're sick of already. That is one reason why I come upstairs and write my thoughts. To-night father said what makes you figget when I was sitting on his lap and mother said have you done your 'verb dear? I suppose she'd rather amuse herself with her drawing and her writing and father said and show us where we get off. Then mother gave him a scowl. I saw it. Which always means keep still its a secret. Once when I heard father sing *gal-lunt, gal-lent, gal-lint* mother almost laughed but not quite and father rored even when mother said I'll never forgive you. It was then that I had an awful feeling in my mind. Do you suppose they read my thoughts? Because I did copy all that letter from Beatrice about Sandy, and then I wrote some thoughts about it and had to spell gallunt many ways to be sure and have it right once. I have to do that when I have too much to say to get the dictionary. I always trust their honor and lock my desk but maybe sometime I just trusted their honor. Parents are certainly hampering about secrets. Yet they have many. You can tell it by the way mother kicks father's foot. And when he looks up and says what do you mean anyway she is in hopeless despare.

December 3. I haven't many thoughts tonight because they have all run into one, the way all those colors in that new plaid gingham ran into blue when it was washed even though mother paid for imported ging-ham and there was much talk about it at dinner until father said O hang the ging-ham! My one thought is about going to visit Beatrice my best friend in a distant city. I shut my eyes and say its true its true its true, and even then it doesn't seem true. Even when mother tells father she can't bear the thought of leaving him she means to go all the time, and when it was settled today father said I'll get your tickets and you can go on the ten eight tomorrow morning. Then mother screamed you dearold stupid boy why I've got to get myself ready and Anne and father said wasn't the laundry home yet and mother just shut her lips tight and side and side which means there's no use to say anything more.

But she did say I had to have a new dress of hand tucks and lace because probably Emily would give me a party. Father said what's the matter with her middy blouses hasn't she enough of them and the kid always looks so pretty in them. Mother explained and explained, but father said he thought a tuck was a tuck no matter how you nailed it in and what is a sewing machine for and why do you have to pay a woman more who won't use one



and if there were boys in the family it would be easier because they could be sewed up on the machine. Sometimes when I have my most serious thoughts I think father wishes I was a boy, but I know mother wouldn't tolerate anything of the kind at all, because hand tucks would not be becoming to it. And she adores hand tucks even though the hand tucking woman is always moving and we lose so much time finding her new address and her head is getting turned too. Once I asked father if he wished I was a boy named Andy instead of a girl named Anne and he said he wouldn't change me for the finest boy on the face of the earth because I was just right. Father is a very handsome man and knows almost everything.

December 13. All the trouble about getting off on our visit makes us wish the visit was over or we had never begun it. Father says there couldn't be more fuss and money about a wedding and true-so, and mother says you wait and see! It's been so many days now since father wanted to buy our tickets and father says mother has waited to do everything except have me confirmed and nockulated for ty-phoid fever. But we're going and the time we've had getting ready will keep mother and Emily talking more than a week, because we've decided to stay until after Christmas and father will come and spend it with us and we will all come home together. I think the trip home will be pleasanter than the one going, because mother likes to have me improve my mind even on a train and gives me a map so I'll see where I am. I know where I am anyway and I loathe maps and failed in geography.

I like to watch the child on the train that drinks all of the way. When it goes for the first drink it's fresh and clean and when it goes for the second and third drinks it is still rather clean; then I begin to watch for it to come down the aisle while mother reads, and

it is getting dirtier and dirtier, until the nurse takes her handkerchief and tips water out of the cup on to it, and scrubs the child's face and makes it mad. There are many interesting things on a train, but I always look for that child the

very first thing, because it is so interesting to watch the dirt gradually come over it, as I count the times it drinks.

When I am on the train with father he talks with mother a great deal so she forgets about improving my mind, or we get off and walk the platforms together and once we ate a sinker which mother thought was going to give me indigestion but it didn't although it was very greasy, and mother told father he should not teach me to say sinker instead of doughnut.

December 15. We're visiting. The house is very nice. Beatrice is very polite but I think that will wear off in time. I hope it will, as it makes me feel very polite too because we haven't seen each other since she and aunt

Emily visited us. Her father is very nice and said he was glad to see me. They have very nice things to eat. Emily is going to give a party for

me and I am so thankful I brought that hand made dress. Mother sat right down and wrote to father that it would have been dreadful if we had come without it so she was right after all. I brought a new pair of roller skates too. But I can never have another pair if I lose these through carelessness. Carelessness is leaving them on the front steps to be stolen.

They talked about the party at din-



ner and want to give it right away before the Christmas rush comes on. Emily says she has to be so careful about Trixy's friends, and my mother says yes so do I. Always when Trixy's mother says what she believes in or what she has to do my mother says the very same thing, and when my mother explains the way *she* does then Emily says that's exactly what I believe my dear you can't be too careful. Our two mothers are the most alike friends I ever saw.

Emily says there are two little girls in the block who have nintangible influence don't you know and she has to use her wits and eyes to elim-inate them gently. Their names are Pansy Baker and Rosamond Miller. I couldn't find nintangible in the "n's" but I'm sure when it's an influence it means the thing you can't catch to punish. Elim-inate means to cut them out and of course that means they won't be invited to the party. I asked where Sandy lived and they all screamed what do you know about Sandy and Trixy kicked my foot. So I didn't say anything more during dinner. P. S. They had ice cream for dessert. Maybe they'll have it every night for dinner because we're company. Let us hope so. I have to be dressed very often.

December 16. It's all worn off, the polite, and I never had such a good time in my life. We saw Pansy Baker and Rosamond Miller this morning and they asked if we're going to have a party



they're not invited. But she heard her mother say she must simply draw the line sometime and she was going to be-

gin with Rosamond and Pansy, and this party.

She said they had a perfectly good time in their own class anyway and there was no reason why she should invite the neighborhood. Our two mothers talked about it for hours and Trixy's father made them keep it up longer because he said they must ask everybody or they would make their daughters snobs. And when they were perfectly furious he just rored the way my father rores when he gets my mother all mixed up in what she's saying. All fathers are very much alike. They are nice and noisy. But Beatrice and I got so tired of the talk when they began about teaching children how to make their friends that we went upstairs and she said there was one blessed good thing about that party and that was that her mother was *not* going to draw the line at Sandy. Boys are very scarce and Sandy is of a very fine family, so he'll be invited. Which is a great relief, because it would be a very queer thing to come so far and find that Emily had not gotten over that thing about Sandy and wouldn't allow him to come to the party, and you couldn't see him.

Beatrice saw him the other day and he almost didn't speak, but she called him over and told him she never would have slapped him about the peaches if all those women hadn't been looking, and he said don't mention it I accept your pology for the insult and we're square believe me. Then he tightened her skates for her which Trixy says is a sure sign that he is a perfect gentleman.

P. S. We must not mention the party to Pansy or Rosamond at all, in no way whatever or under no circumstances whatever.

December 17. Beatrice has lost her skates. Our mothers sent us out a while to get us out of the way and horrors we could not find them any place. She is not going to say anything about

them until we have more time to look. You see, Emily told Trixy those were *her* last skates if she left them on the steps again. Same as mine. That shows the alikeness of our two mothers again. But Beatrice skated on one of mine and I took the other and we held hands. Pansy and Rosamond flirted themselves 'after us and Pansy called out in her thin words can't you afford two pairs of skates I should think if you was rich enough to have a party you could have two pairs of skates and then they skipped off laughing just as hard as they could laugh. I loathe those girls. I feel the nintangible influence already.

P. S. Horrors. Mine are gone too. Horrors. Just as we were coming in we happened to think about the garage and rushed around there to see if the showfer had taken them to put a little oil on the rollers when he was not busy. He was very busy and he hadn't seen the skates and didn't want to see them and said he had troubles of his own. I was so worried about Trixy's I forgot mine until afterward and they are simply gone. I must have dropped them on the steps when we ran around



to the garage. I never saw such a dishonest town in all my life. You can't turn your back for a minute but something's gone. Simply gone. That ends

the skates. O hum. As Trixy says that's always the way in this vail of tears the innocent suffer.

P. S. again. Trixy has arithmetic to make up everyday, and when she's doing that I can do anything I want to. So I write my thoughts. Mostly about those skates. We've decided to think all day tomorrow before we say anything to our mothers about them. They're so excited about the party any-

way and so busy. Trixy's father said whose party is this anyway yours or the kids and they said O if you only knew how much trouble there is about a little thing like this.

December 18. I drove down town with Emily and Beatrice early this morning while mother was writing to father. The poor boy is so lonely she says every day. I was sitting in the machine while they went into the cleaner's for Trixy's slippers and then went into the store next door for candies, and who should come along but those hateful girls. Pansy jumped on to the running board and said where's Beatrice and when I said in Martin's she said buying candy for the party and I never said a word but looked at her as cold as ice. Then the showfer went into the shop to bring out the things and what do you think! That terrible Pansy said if I'd invite her to the party she'd tell me where my skates were. I could not speak. I stood rooted to the spot except I was in the machine and sitting down. I was rooted in my mind I was so shocked. I was trying to think what to say and not make her mad and all I could say was it is not my party where are my skates. She kept on saying party or no skates party or no skates, and I said how *can* I invite you to a party that isn't mine where are my skates, and then she jumped down and sang out but you don't dare say I'm not invited you don't dare, and when I got home my skates were in the vestibule behind the door. I put them in the trunk in my hat box. I haven't told Beatrice yet. I want to think about some things. I wish the party was over. Trixy is doing arithmetic.

P. S. Tonight. There is more excitement in this town than any place I



ever saw in all my life. Something happens every minute. Even when we have an early dinner so that our mothers and one of our fathers can go to the theater. Some notes were brought in to the dinner table and Emily said who in this world and then she screamed *will* you listen to this!! I know those notes because Trixy and I picked them up from where Emily dropped them when they went to the theater. Rosamond's mother wrote Mrs. Miller is most happy to accept the invitation extended to Rosamond for the party tomorrow afternoon at five o'clock, and Pansy's mother wrote dear friend I am so very much obliged to you for including my Pansy in your list of guests for the party tomorrow. Of course she is perfectly wild about it and I do appreciate your kindness in giving her this little pleasure, especially as I understand the perplexities arising on such occasions. It is so hard to draw the line. I hope I shall see you often this winter. Come in some afternoon and bring your embroidery. Do you play progressive euchre very sincerely yours Althea Baker.

Can I ever forget those two notes? Or how the salad stuck in my throat? Or how hot I got? Not a word. Never? Never.

Emily and mother kept on saying now *how* could this thing have happened and *did* you *ever* hear of anything like it and whatever is to be done. Trixy's father just roared and said something about the F—or maybe its Ph—ilistines be upon thee and Emily didn't like it and just looked at my mother and side and side and was in despair.

I don't know what Trixy was doing, and she didn't know what I was doing, because we didn't look to see. She told me tonight she just ate. I was doing the same. But when they went to the theater, Trixy and I had the most very serious talk we've ever had. She

looked right into my eyes and said where are your skates and I said in the hat box where are yours and she said in my writing desk.

She knew. I knew. We both knew.

Rosamond got her invitation out of Beatrice the very same way Pansy got hers out of me. But Trixy says that after all it is doing them a great kindness to give them this pleasure, because mothers are sometimes almost cruel in their strictness when it comes to the business of drawing the line. The poor little things were probably so hungry to go to a select party that they had to swipe the skates long enough to settle it. Poor little things. At least it was a comfort to think they were to have a great pleasure for once in their lives. I feel very much better. At first my feelings were awful. Conscience is worse than measles when the rash is thickest and the room darkest. I never thought about the kindness part until Beatrice mentioned it. And we are certainly told to be kind to others. And Beatrice says too that it is kinder not to talk about it now to our mothers when they are so busy, and that they'll feel better in the excitement of the party.

December 19. I could go to parties every day. Every single day. Sandy dances perfectly lovely. He stepped all over my white slippers and they're a sight and mother doesn't know whether they can be cleaned or not and they were new. When I saw how they looked I said O dear me the way you've stepped all over my slippers and Sandy said yes but look at the way you've stepped all over my heart believe me. And I laughed and laughed. It was so amusing. But those horrid things Fanny and Rosamond. Trixy says they shall never get inside of *her* house again not if she loses every skate to her body and I certainly don't blame her after all the time we had to keep them from dancing with Sandy. At first

there was just nothing. Their dresses were trimmed more than any bodys and they just looked around at everything as if it wasn't so much after all. Our two mothers were very polite of course. They had cooled off and decided some other child had said why of course you're expected everybody's going and they simply told their mothers they were invited too. And so. There were many other ways our mothers explained that I do not remember because Trixy and I did not always stay to listen to it all. But those horrid girls. I loathe them. I told Beatrice kindness is thrown away on some people and she said she *never* saw such manners.

The very minute Sandy came in they went right up to him and Rosamond asked him if he would dance with her and Pansy said in her little thin words O yes and me too. Beatrice and I heard the whole thing from where we stood and she whispered in my ear this is where I draw a line. But we had a perfectly awful time drawing it. They tagged him and tagged him, all around the parlor and halls until we were so figgety we could hardly talk to the others and whenever she could Beatrice just *glared* at those girls and *glared*.

Finally she said excuse me to Francis Cole and managed to drag them up to her mother and motioned me to talk to Sandy quick, and told her mother that Pansy and Rosamond wanted to dance with Sammy Stone and Jimmy Kent the minute the music began and left them with her mother.

Then Emily and my mother had to dance with Pansy and Rosamond until Sammy and Jimmy danced with two other girls they had asked first, and after that our two mothers had to show them some steps as they had not been to dancing school very often. So that Pansy and Rosamond were with our two mothers most of the party.

And I danced with Sandy. And danced and danced. That's how my slippers got so dirty and how he said that about his heart.

P. S. And that is why I like an exciting town. I never saw so many nice boys in one room before in my life, and none of them were soapy, but I think Sandy is the most gallant.



A PRAYER

WE is the hand that pats my face,
Tiny the feet that, romping, chase
The butterflies round the garden place.

Sweet is the mouth that touches mine,
And the merry eyes that dance and shine,
And the curls that round one's heartstrings twine.

Dear Lord, I pray my heart aye chime
To meet that heart that beats in rhyme
With the birds and the flowers and the glad springtime.

THEODORA ZAKRZEWSKI.

GOING AFTER IT



By
HOLMAN F. DAY.

ILLUSTRATED BY VICTOR PERARD

TWO men wearing plug hats stepped off the late afternoon train when it stopped at the shire town of Cuxabexis County, and even for the shire town, two plug hats bearing each other company were worth a second glance. One arrival was Hiram Look, known to all who gazed on him as Sheriff Aaron Sproul's close friend. Mr. Look was escorting with much solicitude a tall, cadaverous old man, who looked as if he might have been a real personage once upon a time, in the days before his tightly buttoned coat had become threadbare and his plug hat had grown fuzzy.

Mr. Look led his companion to the county buildings.

"As I've told you, colonel, several times," said the conductor of the little expedition, "my friend Sproul, having been a master mariner most of his life, ain't quite so much of a hand to coo as a turtledove is. But first of all, he is a friend of mine, and is all right when you understand how to handle

him. I want you to perk up and be hopeful. I reckon I can put the deal through."

"In view of the fact that I had quite resigned myself to go to State prison for the rest of my life, anything else that is done for me will seem Heaven sent, sir," declared the old man earnestly.

Mr. Look led the way into the sheriff's office and carefully closed the door. Sheriff Sproul turned from his desk and surveyed his guests over his spectacles, showing no especial enthusiasm.

"First of all, I want you to shake hands with Colonel Dominicus Treadwell, of Sunhaze," invited Hiram, pushing along his companion.

When the formality was over, Hiram acted further as master of ceremonies, and pulled up chairs. He gave the sheriff and the colonel cigars, and lighted one for himself.

"This is all between friends," he assured them, "and there's nothing like

starting in all sociable. I want to report as special deputy, sheriff. You remember that you sent me upcountry to investigate a tragedy."

Cap'n Sproul did not appear to be particularly interested.

"I remember that I got an anonymous letter from some crazy crank, threatening to do something, and you insisted on running off on a wild-geese chase."

"I reckon you'll have to beg pardon of Colonel Treadwell for calling him a crank, and you might also excuse yourself to me for saying that I'm undertaking any wild-geese chases. I went up to Sunhaze and saved this office from being criticized for neglect of duty. Colonel Treadwell wrote that letter, and he knew what he was talking about. Exactly at the hour set by him, he tried to shoot his brother in the village square."

The sheriff shot amazed glance at the colonel, and the colonel bowed, to indorse Hiram's statement.

"He meant to kill brother aforesaid," the special deputy went on, "but being a little absent-minded naturally, and having various other matters to ponder on that day, the colonel had blank shells in his gun instead of the loaded shells."

"It was regrettable," said the colonel apologetically.

"I should say it was!" snapped the sheriff. "When a man kills his own brother——"

"I beg your pardon! I regret that I made such a silly mess of the affair. The shooting was thoroughly premeditated. By my oversight, I have made myself an object of ridicule once more in my native village. They are sneering behind my back, and are saying again that Dominicus Treadwell never did anything he started out to do."

"What are you? A lunatic they've been letting run loose up there?" demanded Cap'n Sproul a bit brutally, now displaying true amazement.

"You might look at me, and determine that for yourself, sir."

"There ain't much to go by in looks these days. What kind of a condemned yarn is this, anyway?" the sheriff barked, whirling on Hiram.

"Facts as stated are true and vouched for. Now, as to the extenuating circumstances——"

"You needn't bother me about any extenuating circumstances. All that matter comes before the judge and jury. I'm the sheriff of this county, that's all. Where are your commitment papers?"

"Now, wait a minute, Aaron! You see——"

"Yes, and I have heard—and I suppose you ain't lying. I give you that much credit. Papers!" He put out his hand and snapped a finger into his palm.

"There ain't any papers. The colonel hasn't been arraigned."

"Then take him out before a justice and tend to it. It ought to have been done in his own town."

"Look here, Aaron, you've got to listen to this thing. It's a queer case. By good rights, it hadn't ought to go any farther."

"He tried to shoot his brother, didn't he? Both of you agree on it. If that's the case, you take the prisoner——"

"He isn't a prisoner—that is, I ain't making him one officially as yet. You listen: He didn't hurt the brother. The brother was the provoking party. The colonel didn't shoot because he hated his brother especially, or wanted him to be dead—though the brother is one of the sort that ain't a particular comfort to himself or the community. The colonel had lost all his property, had his roof taken from over his head by bank foreclosing a mortgage, was all in every way, and was hungry and wanted to be taken care of without sinking himself to be a pauper in his own home town. So he thought he

would make a man's job of it and go to State prison."

"He'll go, all right! He has got his wish. What's the good of sitting here and talking it over, seeing that it's satisfactory all round?"

"But it isn't satisfactory," stormed Hiram, pounding his fist on the arm of the chair. "I have been looking into this thing. It isn't right for this man to wind up his life in prison. Just because he was desperate and hopeless, and tried his own way without good advice, is no reason for letting the mistake go further. I'm his adviser and friend, from now on. I propose to see him through this trouble and then put him in right."

"You needn't bother about putting him in—the court will tend to it," stated the sheriff grimly.

"He isn't going to State prison."

"How are you going to stop it?"

"This thing will never be pressed against him. The citizens consider it's between him and his brother. No grudge is held against the colonel. The whole blasted town is sleepier than a doped anaconda in a side show. I'll run back up there and fix the brother. He's a no-account. But the colonel, here," declared Hiram, patting the old gentleman's thin knee, "deserves to be protected. Hard luck is what ails him, Aaron. Everything he has undertaken has gone wrong. If you only could have sat with him in his old mansion, as I sat—every stick of furniture gone out of it—and heard his story, you would be thinking the way I'm thinking right now. We ate the last few crumbs of his old Stilton cheese that he's been saving for years—we drank the last of the rum that went around the Horn in one of his father's ships—and, I tell ye, Aaron, the tears were in my eyes while I sat there."

Cap'n Sproul did not thaw visibly. He looked from Hiram to the face of the colonel.

"Was this hobnobbing after the shooting?"

"Yes; we went up to his house to talk the matter over."

"I thought it was better to explain," said Colonel Treadwell wistfully.

"I reckon that the circus business has spoiled what little common sense you were born with," the sheriff informed Hiram. "It will be a nice word to go around over this county that one of my officers sat down and spread it with a prisoner after prisoner had tried to shoot a brother in cold blood!"

"You needn't slur my common sense," protested Hiram, with ire. "Here is a case where I'm using it. Law might send this old gent to State prison, but real justice never will. And he's going to get justice. And he's going to have his chance to make good. I'm behind him. I'll put it to you straight and short for the present, Aaron. Make me his special keeper until I can fix all matters upcountry, and can show you that there won't be any charges preferred. The colonel will stop at the hotel with me, and you needn't be a mite afraid that he won't be on deck the minute he is wanted."

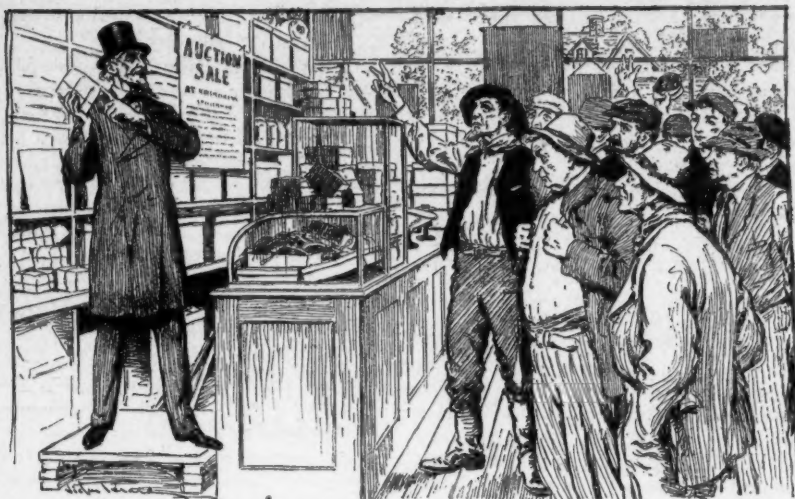
And, therefore, Cap'n Sproul, wholly at sea in the queer matter, anyway, gave permission, and felt relieved when the colonel stalked out with his keeper.

"Hope I'll never see that old human angleworm again," the sheriff informed himself. "A gent in a jail is always underfoot. I couldn't do anything sensible with him unless I filled that plug hat full of eggs and set him to hatching 'em."

Sheriff Sproul was visibly annoyed and looked worried when Hiram Look came back towing the colonel two days later. Hiram drew papers from his pocket, and the sheriff scowled.

"Commitment papers, hey?"

"Not by a blamed sight!" returned Mr. Look jubilantly. "Here's a paper from the brother admitting the error of



The auction was a great success. Colonel Treadwell was a courtly and pleasing auctioneer—and the first bundles were hastily opened by the eager purchasers.

his ways, and saying that he will press no charges."

"Price tag not attached, eh?" inquired the sheriff, with a touch of sarcasm.

"There's the paper—details are the business of the colonel and myself," returned Hiram stiffly. "Here's a paper signed by many leading citizens of Sunhaze, testifying to the high character and general standing of Colonel Treadwell, and hoping he will do well wherever he may roam."

"I have shaken the dust of Sunhaze off my feet forevermore," declared the colonel.

Neither Hiram nor his protégé mentioned the fact that the citizens had signed that paper with great alacrity when they had been assured that the colonel proposed to leave town and stay away.

"I've got nothing to say, unless further complaint is made and I'm called on officially," stated the sheriff. "Good day!"

"Colonel Treadwell is going into busi-

ness, and will be backed by me," stated Mr. Look. "And we hope you're going to be able to extend the helping hand, Aaron."

"Best I can promise is that I won't stick out the tripping foot, so long as he don't try to shoot any more brothers," snapped the high sheriff. "I'm glad the two of you are going into business. Then you won't be bothered so much with mine."

The two plug hats retired from the presence.

"He is rather short-spoken, but his heart is all right," vouchsafed Mr. Look on the way to the street. "You needn't worry, colonel. I'll tackle him some day when he is feeling right, and we'll have him in with us. His name will help in anything we undertake."

"I trust so. I feel great courage at the present time, Colonel Look," declared the old gentleman, giving his protector a title in his new exaltation. "I look back over my life and note that I have been derelict. I have been too

confiding. I have trusted other men too much. I have allowed them to put their hands into my pockets and help themselves."

"I reckon that's so, colonel, from what you have told me. You have been an easy mark."

"Some folks might think it was folly for a man of my age to start now to make good. But I have courage, and I can profit by my past mistakes, Colonel Look."

"And you've got a man behind you who was proprietor of Look's Leviathan Circus and Menagerie for twenty years. I'll admit that I have allowed men to get near enough to me in times past to pick my pocket. But while they were getting ten cents that I left handy for 'em on purpose, I was frisking 'em for their roll, their watch, and their scarfpin. You understand that I'm referring to business deals, Colonel Treadwell. I don't want a gent like you to think I ever actually picked a man's pocket."

"I understand, Colonel Look! And the same spirit now animates me, after being with you during the past few days and drinking in wisdom at your feet. If only I had had your advice in my early days! But it's not too late."

"Feeling the way you do, you're right in the prime of life," cried Hiram. "It's how a man feels that does the business. And the principal thing is that you feel that nobody else can ever touch you up! You're going after it, colonel! You're going after it strong! And, seeing how they have used you, I reckon you're justified in going a little stronger than most men would be. You'll only be striking a general average."

"I have pondered on the matter lately and I feel that you're right," said the colonel, his eyes gleaming. "I have trusted other men and I have been mocked and jeered at. Business, as it has been worked on me, has been rob-

bery veneered. Why shouldn't I turn around and get back my own?"

"Aaron Sproul claims that I have had some of my finer sensibilities blunted by staying in the show business so long, but I have had my wits sharpened, by gad, and I've got the money in the bank to show for it! And if I didn't have money, you wouldn't see so many men touching hats to me as I walk down this street," stated Hiram, with pride. "A man's ears are pitched forward, ain't they? He ain't supposed to hear what's said behind his back."

"I have sort of held myself aloof from real business," confessed the colonel sadly. "As I look back, I remember that none of the men who took my money away from me seemed to have horror of conscience. They were plainly pleased and satisfied."

"Take a real business man," stated Mr. Look, "and there's nothing that's any more cheering and comforting than the knowledge at the end of a happy day that his kaleoscope has been in good working order since morning."

"Kaleoscope?"

"Exactly! His scheme for gathering in the kale. What is real business, anyway? It's getting the stuff. The only thing you can call your own is what the rest of the boys haven't succeeded in getting away from you. They're up and after it every minute of the day."

"I feel that my whole nature is changing since I have met you, Colonel Look—is brightening and broadening, I may say."

"I have always been considered something of a broadener in my day," said Hiram, tipping his plug hat a bit over his right eye. "And when I have seen something worth picking up, I haven't stood and shuffled and clucked, drawing others folks' attention, like an old hen calling her brood; I have picked first and early, and have done my cahdahing later. That's business! And

don't you allow your old genteel notions to get hold of you again."

Colonel Treadwell, his eyes gleaming with new fires, sat assiduously at Hiram's feet during the next few days and imbibed business wisdom. Then, desiring to show his aptness as a student, he came out with a proposition. That proposition staggered the preceptor. Briefly, the colonel desired to peddle all the worthless land shares, mining stock, oil bunkoes, wildcat bonds, and other riffraff that had been unloaded on him in years past.

"I can go into the remote towns and sell to farmers and spinsters and widows whose wisdom has not been sharpened. I think my personality will help a great deal. I can be very urbane. And I can tell the same lies the agents told to me. I remember them very well."

Hiram goggled astonished stare at his ready pupil.

"You see," proceeded the colonel, "those agents succeeded with me because I was not sharp. Therefore, I will pick out men and women who are even greener than I was."

"Say, look here, I'm not advising you to rob henroosts and pick pockets."

"But it was real business when those agents sold to me; it ought to be real business when I sell to others who are below me a few scales in acuteness."

Mr. Look arose and displayed some indignation.

"Making all due allowances for the fact that you're more or less of a child in business, Colonel Treadwell, I'm going to say that I don't take it kindly to find out that you think I'm Professor Crook himself, giving a private course of lectures on highway robbery and second-story work. What general idea have you been drawing from what I've had to say to you since we met?"

"I have gathered that you advocate going after money, and going strong—

and, after you get it, that's real business success."

"In cases like this, I'm plain spoken and to the point, my friend. Have I got hold of a natural-born country black-leg, who has only lacked courage and opportunity?"

"I only intended to apply your teachings," returned the colonel, showing resentment of his own.

"But, good Cephas, there's a line to be drawn!"

"Then draw the line and show it to me, Colonel Look. You claim to be the instructor."

"Selling the orphan and the widder bunk shares and stocks ain't business."

"Well, a man who was steward of a church and who is now president of a bank sold me one thousand shares in the Wind Mountain Mining and Developing Company—and there wasn't any company, there wasn't any development, there wasn't any mining, there wasn't any mountain."

"Leaving only wind, eh?"

"Why would I be worse than that bank president if I should sell my stock?"

"Perhaps you wouldn't be. I don't know him, and I'm feeling just now that I don't know you very well. But if you undertake any of that kind of dingdo business while I'm backing you, Colonel Treadwell, you and me will split with a sound worse than when a cyclone ripped my main tent in two. I am quite a hand to train a man to a business career, but you seem to be a mite over-trained."

He continued to glare at his pupil, trying to fathom the nature that lay behind those gleaming eyes and that wrinkled old countenance. Colonel Treadwell did not reveal contrition or any other emotion.

"Have you got any other business plans concealed about you?" demanded Mr. Look. "Out with 'em, if you have,



"I will place the capital prize of twenty dollars in this envelope, which is numbered ten," explained Colonel Treadwell, unctuously bland.

so that I can get some kind of a line on you."

The colonel shook his head.

"I will take a few more lessons, and will try to understand you better."

"Guess your idea is a good one, my friend. You don't seem to be qualified just yet for a diploma—not exactly. That probably comes from your way of life in the past. But if you ain't as innocent as you act and look, and if you go to putting anything across on me, there's going to be trouble that the weather bureau hasn't had any notice of as yet."

"You seem anxious to pick trouble with me all of a sudden," protested the colonel.

"When I want to pick trouble, you'll know it," stated the blunt old showman. "Just now I'm only issuing warning bulletins. I'll say that I had in mind something a little ambitious, Colonel Treadwell, seeing that you're a gent who has seen better days. But I reckon we won't open the show under the big top till I see what you can do in the side concession, so to speak. I have taken over a store and stock of notions because the fellow owed me money on

a bill of sale. I'll put you in there as manager, if it isn't too much of a come-down for you."

"I'm out to make good, and I'll do my best," declared the colonel. "Beggars should not be choosers."

"Glad to hear that kind of talk. If I have misjudged you, I beg your pardon."

"Perhaps I became too enthusiastic under your teachings," confessed the student humbly.

"I realize that I'm a pretty strong talker, and that you're an innocent sort. Having had our understanding, we'll get along all right after this. Go into that store and use your brains to develop business. Original ideas will make a go of it."

Hiram had occasion to compliment his partner at the end of the first week. Colonel Treadwell developed a knack of getting on well with customers. He covered the outside of the store with freshly painted signs. He rearranged the stock and sorted out the shopworn stuff. He suggested to Hiram that it would be a good idea to make up a hundred neatly tied and exactly duplicate bundles, so far as outward appearance went, and auction these off—customers to discover what they had purchased when the bundles were opened.

"It's a prime idea," agreed Mr. Look. "The whole world loves a gamble. I must say you're some operator! How did you happen to think up the scheme?"

"It isn't exactly my own," confessed the colonel modestly. "But in my lonely vigils, after those business men had stolen my money from me, I read business books, hoping to find some way of getting back my own. I secured many ideas. And I have a young friend in the city who is very shrewd. I wrote to him about this new venture of ours, and he has given me some valuable hints. I will develop them."

"So do!" advised Hiram, with great

heartiness. "And follow up this auction idea with others off the same piece. I tell you again that a gamble is the chief relish of the nations. Spice plain business with it, and you've got 'em crowding to the side of the dish."

The auction was a great success. Colonel Treadwell was a courtly and pleasing auctioneer—and the first bundles were hastily opened by the eager purchasers. Folks gasped when it was seen how much was given for the money, and prices soared. Other customers were not as well pleased after they had run up the bidding; the bundles did not turn out any prizes. But the colonel was unctuously consoling, and explained that one must take chances in this world. After the affair was over, Hiram figured that the shopworn goods had been sold for about twice their actual value.

"It's all from whetting the appetite for a gamble, colonel. You've caught the right idea. The law has stopped so many good gambles that the people don't have a chance to indulge. Anything up your sleeve for another splurge?"

"I think I have something. I'll develop a suggestion made by my young friend."

"Go ahead! You're manager here. You needn't bother to tell me ahead what you propose to do. I want you to have confidence in your own ability. That's the only way you'll make the most of yourself. Go after it!"

In his new enthusiasm, Mr. Look took active steps for the rehabilitation of Colonel Dominicus Treadwell. He made a masterfully pathetic story of the fall of the colonel's fortunes, and related it with vigor and feeling to the leading citizens of the shire town. And then he went to Sheriff Sproul and laid a paper in front of that gentleman.

"There you see what can be done by using common sense and charity in this world, Aaron. I found an old gent

down on his luck and desperate. Tom, Dick, and Harry of your deputies would have bulled the whole proposition. I saw deep into the case, after I had talked with him. Even you, left to yourself, would have put him into State prison. I put him back into life—right! He is showing himself a wonder in business. And look at this paper! Signed by such men as the president of the First National, treasurer of the savings bank, four parsons, myself—and I don't pillow heads on my throbbing breast as a general thing!"

"It seems to be interesting reading, even if there ain't much plot to it," remarked Cap'n Sproul, surveying the document coldly. "What's your idea in showing it to me?"

"Why, blast it all, I want your signature! The prominent men in this place, without regard to religion or politics, have indorsed Colonel Treadwell, allowing him to refer to them in such business deals as he may undertake. You ain't going to hang back from a good deed, are you?"

"Do the men who signed that know that he tried to shoot his own brother?"

"It ain't necessary to put up full-sheet posters advertising that this poor old gent made a mistake."

"I do happen to know it," stated the sheriff. "He told me so himself. According to his say, the mistake was that he left the loaded shells out of the gun."

"It has been all explained to you that it was an error of judgment. He thought it was all over with him. He preferred to go to State prison rather than die on the town—and I call that good Yankee grit. He is now making good. If you're a man, you'll sign that paper."

"Once when I was in Australia, taking out wooden ware and hides back, I allowed somebody to hornfoogle me into throwing a boomerang, just to see if I could do it. And while I was look-

ing up into the sky to find out where that boomerang went, the jodiggered thing came whizzing from somewhere and lammed me in the back of the head." He pushed the paper across the desk to Hiram. "Speaking as high sheriff of this county, with full knowledge of certain facts about that man, I hereby notify you that I am all done throwing boomerangs."

"Do you propose to insult my judgment of a man?"

"I'm simply tending out on my own business, and not bothering with yours."

"Good day!" said Hiram, with acerbity. "I'm glad you have shown your hand. We don't want an enemy in our camp. Colonel Treadwell has plenty of friends."

"He may be able to pull through in spite of 'em, though I have found it a pretty hard struggle in my own case," rejoined the cap'n, meeting the reproachful stare of Mr. Look with equanimity.

When the patron turned the document over to his protégé, the colonel studied the signatures with interest—in fact, went down the list a second time, his thin finger tagging each name.

"I don't find the name of your friend, Sheriff Sproul, here. But perhaps you haven't seen him as yet."

"Don't need him—not with that array."

But Colonel Treadwell blinked appealingly at Mr. Look, and for unspoken reasons of his own appeared to disagree on the point.

"I don't believe we'd better muss the paper up with names of officeholders," insisted Hiram. "Once start with officeholders, and there's no telling when to leave off."

"But the high sheriff's name is sort of—of—protecting."

"In view of the fact that we don't intend to run a thieves' retreat or a burglars' paradise, I don't see what



"I want to be taken to Doctor Dominicus Treadwell's sanitarium as fast as you can gallop your horses," he snapped.

need there is of protection, Colonel Treadwell."

"But your instructions about appealing to the gambling sense—about stirring the sporting blood—" faltered the other.

"Look here, you're getting off onto that same strain again about my instructions," admonished Hiram, with some indignation. "You be careful and draw the line."

"I'll try to do so, Colonel Look. I'll

probably be able to do so later, when I have had a little more business training. But if I make mistakes —"

"You'd better not make mistakes," said Hiram grimly. "If your conscience is in good working order, you won't make mistakes. That's the test of a real business man. He goes after it! He goes the limit. He grabs before the other fellow gets his bread hooks on the prize. But when conscience runs up the red flag, he stops. You ain't in any doubt about the condition of your conscience, are you?"

"I think not, sir. I have had hard knocks during my life, but I trust my conscience hasn't been marred."

However, when Hiram Look dropped in on Colonel Treadwell some days later, it appeared that the colonel's conscience had a cog missing.

A group of absorbed men were assembled in the rear of the shop, and the colonel was the center of the assemblage. He was presiding over a pasteboard shoe box in which were stacked many small leather envelopes. Hiram stopped on the edge of the party without attracting the colonel's notice.

"I will place the capital prize of twenty dollars in this envelope, which is numbered ten," explained Colonel Treadwell, unctuously bland.

He did so, and stuck the envelope down among its mates. Then he shuffled the contents of the box while he talked.

"Of course, you will understand that this is not a lottery or a gaming device of any sort. It's a little, innocent pastime to stimulate trade. For instance, now that you are assured that the capital prize of twenty dollars is in one of the envelopes—the envelope numbered ten, to be exact—I will accept bids on this scarfpin, the purchaser to be allowed first draw from the box."

The bit of jewelry was patently cheap gilt, but the men who stood around and peered into the shoe box noted that the colonel had left the corner of one envelope sticking up a bit above the level of the others, and was not conscious of his oversight; that is, he seemed to be wholly occupied with the scarfpin and his little talk. A figure one was visible and also the top of what was manifestly a zero.

"I'll give you a dollar for that pin," proffered a bystander hastily.

"Two dollars!" cried another, pulling out his money.

"Four!" declared a third.

"Five—yes, six!" was the offer of a bidder who elbowed his way to the colonel and shoved money under the old man's thin nose.

"Ten!" shouted a man who saw an opportunity to swap that amount for a yellow-backed twenty. He stuck the money into the colonel's hand, and the colonel closed fingers on it.

"The scarfpin is sold, gentlemen. No—no more bids! It might seem like gambling if I accepted more. We merely aim to sell goods at a fair profit. The little premium idea merely adds zest to dull business. Now, sir, draw!"

The purchaser picked at the exposed corner of the envelope with the avidity of a hungry hen grabbing corn. He lifted the flap and drew forth a card on which were the words, "No Prize." The twenty-dollar bill was not in the en-

velope. He examined the number on the corner. That number was 19. The loop of the 9 was abnormally big—and the tail was very, very small.

"Well, I'll be dumbasted!" barked the buyer.

"I think you were a little hasty," said the colonel, mildly reproachful. "I was just going to push that envelope down. We must be fair, you know. I'm afraid you were trying to take advantage of my carelessness."

The hasty man grew red, and looked ashamed, for the colonel displayed much dignity.

"Now we will try it again, so that all may have a chance," proceeded the bland operator. He picked up a handful of envelopes and sorted out No. 10.

"It is still here, and I will replace the——"

"I'm sorry to interrupt you, Colonel Treadwell," said Mr. Look in icy tones, "but some important business has just come up, and I want to see you in private. And you'd better let these gents pass on, one and all, for the present. I'll be detaining you for some little time."

Hiram locked the door when the party had retired.

"Hump-backed heifer of the wall-eyed Hosea!" he exploded. "What the blue blazes are you turning my store into? You're running a game that would disgrace the side show of old Tart Welch when he used to stand jaspers on their heads and jounce the coin out of their pockets. The Mormon Giant and the Petrified Peruvian——"

"I am simply stimulating trade, sir!"

"Condemn your old pickled ha'slet, don't you think I know the gazara game when I see it? What do you think I run a circus twenty years for? Who are you—old Tap Friskum back on earth for the second time? Where are you getting this bunko stuff?"

"I have explained to you, Colonel Look——"

"I ain't any colonel! I ain't any fake—not at my time of life!"

"I am receiving some valuable business hints from my young friend in the city."

"That young fellow, whoever he is, ain't been spending his time playing checkers in any Y. M. C. A. club. You'd better pick another line of friends. I say again to you, Colonel Treadwell, that either you're almighty innocent or else——"

"Kindly pause one moment, Mr. Look. On several occasions you have started to asperse my character, and I have borne it with patience. You misunderstand me entirely. I am merely trying to show energy and ambition. You have urged me to do so. But I am finding that when I show energy, I am abused and vilified worse than when I was a meek victim. I will go back to Sunhaze and die on the poor farm. It will be better."

"I reckon you haven't been out in the world enough to know what is what," admitted Hiram. "That critter in the city has been putting up a job on you. He has probably got a sense of humor, and is working it. You can't pull stuff like a gazara game in a place of this size, my friend." His tone grew milder. The humility of his protégé touched him. "They are my friends around here. I'm identified with this store. Stick to straight business after this. You needn't get too enterprising."

"I will obey, sir."

"I understand all about how the world has used you. It's been mighty hard. I don't blame you for wanting to get back at 'em. If it was a case of trimming outsiders—a long way off from here—I don't know but what I'd condone."

"I suppose that would be the better way."

"I don't say it's better, colonel. But there's certainly something due you for

what has been done to you. If you did it to outsiders, well, it wouldn't be so bad."

"Have you anything to suggest?"

"Not by a blame' sight!" Hiram hastened to say. "You seem to have too much of a notion of improving on my instructions."

He departed with some haste, as if he feared that his reticence might be uncorked by this appealing old gentleman who hung so submissively upon his mentor's utterances.

"It is worth thinking upon—his suggestion about outsiders. I will ponder. Now that my activities have been narrowed, there will be plenty of time for rumination," sighed Colonel Treadwell, putting away the box with the leather envelopes.

Some weeks later, a cadaverous gentleman alighted from the train at the railroad station of the shire town. It would be more proper to state that he crawled from the train, rather than alighted. A brakeman propped him on one side and a man who was evidently a valet supported him on the other. He swore at the two of them with the testy volubility of the hypochondriac, and when the brakeman stepped on his foot, he pushed the two helpers away and marched to a cab with a surprising amount of vigor.

"I want to be taken to Doctor Dominicus Treadwell's sanitarium as fast as you can gallop your horses," he snapped. "I have just been unnerved by two fools. I am dying."

"Come again with the address," invited the hackman.

The valet loaded baggage into the cab.

"Doctor Treadwell's sanitarium, you idiot!"

"Never heard of it. It ain't here."

"Why, it's a building as big as a church!"

"Then they've got it tucked away in a mighty good hiding place."

"Put that baggage into a carriage where the driver isn't a fool," commanded the invalid.

The valet obeyed, and the testy gentleman followed the luggage.

"Double fare if you get me to Doctor Treadwell's sanitarium before I die!"

This driver was wiser than his fellow.

"I'll give him a ride, and he'll pay for it!" he told himself, as he whipped up his horses.

He was tearing past the county buildings when the fare hailed him with fury in his tones:

"What are you dragging me past my destination for? What do you mean by trying your imposition on a dying man?"

"Why, this ain't——"

"Don't you presume to lie to me. I'm on to all your hackman tricks. Stop!"

The driver pulled his horses to a standstill, and the invalid hustled into the buildings, leaving his man to pay the cab charge.

The door of the office of High Sheriff Sproul was open, and that gentleman was revealed, busy at his desk. The perturbed invalid marched in, absorbed in his own troubles and paying scant heed to any objects or circumstances that might have informed him of his error.

"Doctor, I want your instant attention. I have just been put into a terrible state."

Cap'n Sproul hooked his chin around over his shoulder and stared above his spectacles at the snappish intruder.

"This is an emergency! Why don't you act?" demanded the visitor. "Don't you see that I need immediate attention?"

"Will you have your cell padded, or just plain and ordinary?" inquired the sheriff.

"Doctor Treadwell, I'm astonished!"

"Surprise party is mutual."

"I come here to your sanitarium, Doctor Treadwell, and you——"

"There are some names I can stand—I'm used to being called names," broke in Cap'n Sproul. "But when you call me Treadwell, it comes near being fighting talk. I happen to know a critter by that name, and he ain't one of my kind."

The invalid pulled a paper from his pocket, spread it open, laid it on the sheriff's desk, and banged his fist on it.

"Do you mean to tell me that this isn't a picture of your sanitarium—the very building in which I now am standing?"

The paper bore a muddy half-tone cut of the county jail, and a line below heralded, "Doctor Dominicus Treadwell's Famous Sanitarium for All Diseases of the Heart."

"Do you deny it?" squealed the invalid. "After I have traveled five hundred miles to get here? Do you say there are no such men in this town as these names represent?" He pulled out another paper. It was a reproduction of the round robin that indorsed Dominicus Treadwell and allowed him to "refer all inquirers." "Are there such men as these in this town?"

"There are," acknowledged the sheriff, scanning the autographs.

"Then attend to your duty, or I'll expose you to these men."

High Sheriff Sproul opened his mouth to tell some truths to this insistent stranger, and then he closed it. It occurred to him that he'd better take second thought before he exposed to this irritable gentleman facts that might seriously embarrass leading citizens.

"What's your particular ailment?" he inquired.

"Heart trouble! Can't you see what is the matter? What kind of a specialist are you, if you can't determine that at once?"

"If you've got heart trouble, you'd better sit down and take it easy for a few minutes," advised the sheriff. "That's a prescription that won't cost you a cent. In the meantime, I'll step out and arrange matters for you."

The cap'n used a conciliatory tone. The irate invalid seemed capable of making considerable trouble for leading citizens who had put their names to that indorsement.

"You'll do well to arrange matters—and arrange them mighty sudden," said the visitor. He wrinkled his nose. "I begin to smell something very fishy in all this—and if I have been fooled, I'll advertise this town and its blackleg indorsers of a fake so that all of you will be a stench in the nostrils of the world. It looks to me as if a whole town had gone into a bunko scheme. Bah!"

"You'd better not make up your mind too sudden about this town," advised the sheriff grimly. "Too much thinking means wear and tear, and that's bad for a man with heart trouble."

He picked the papers from the desk, stuffed them into his pocket, and walked out. He unobtrusively, but securely, locked the door behind him.

Cap'n Sproul located Hiram Look without difficulty, Hiram's plug hat being an oriflamme that made his trail an easy one.

"Here are a couple of chromos that you'll probably want framed to hang up in the parlor," stated the cap'n, handing over the photogravures of the sanitarium and the round robin. "And if I were in your place, I'd make an artistic job of it by waiting two days for the coffin plate of that long-legged old bog snipe you've been consorting with for the last two months. His funeral is about due, and the coffin plate will set off the chromos."

Mr. Look gave the papers hasty, horrified, and dizzy scrutiny.

"They were handed to me just now

by a fussy gent who has banged up here five hundred miles to be cured of heart trouble. He seems to be having a bad relapse, and is threatening to give this town a worse name than Gomorrah ever had. I have locked him up in my office, Mr. Hiram Look, Esquire, so as to give you a few minutes to collect what few thoughts you've got rattling around in that circus-man brain of yours. Maybe you can save this town from being disgraced, but I reckon you've gone too far this time."

"I haven't disgraced it. This is none of my doing," clamored Hiram, slapping the papers with the back of his hand.

"Who was it imported that old jumping jack into this town and started pulling strings and has kept him jumping ever since? Who got those leading citizens to sign that paper? Who——"

"I've got no time to stand here and listen to your 'whos,' you cussed hoot owl!" blazed the furious Hiram. He stamped away down the street, and the sheriff went along.

"I've got to have a story to tell that heart fellow when I get back and let him out," he informed the old showman. "You'd better get your circus lying machine in order, and grind out one for me. If this thing ain't fixed mighty sudden, you'd better heave to and shorten sail, and stand by for something strong in the wind line from them leading citizens."

Mr. Look was incoherent when he faced Colonel Treadwell in their joint office at the rear of the notion store. The colonel hastily scraped pills and powders into a drawer when his visitors entered.

"There is no need of all this violent language, Mr. Look," he said. "Profanity never helps a chat between gentlemen. What you are showing me is a part of my advertising campaign. I am informed by good authorities that a modicum of exaggeration is allowable

in advertising. This little brochure on 'How to Conduct a Mail-order Business' states——"

"Mail order be condemned, you old pirate! A man has struck town looking up your sanitarium. He has come right here."

"There was nothing in the advertising inviting patients to come," returned Colonel Treadwell.

"Medicine was to be shipped. I used the picture of the jail merely to give solidity to my advertising. If the patient is a friend of yours, tell him to go away, and I will ship goods to him."

"What do you know about curing heart trouble?"

"Nothing. But when you suggested dealing with outsiders——"

"Look here, Treadwell, I have been in doubt about you up till now. You have had me guessing. And now I see that you are exactly what my last best guess was. You're a natural-born one! It was in you all the time, and never had a chance to develop."

"You woke me! You encouraged me! You instructed and advised!"

"Keep it up on that line, and give it to him good and strong," put in Cap'n Sproul. "You're on the right tack! He needs it."

Mr. Look divided malignant stare between the two.

"I'm no piker, when it comes to responsibility," he declared. "This is a fifty-fifty proposition, and I stand for my half. Treadwell, do you know the



At last the old showman's imposing demeanor, plug hat, and mighty voice produced the right effect. The stranger listened.

address of that young and able adviser of yours?"

"Certainly!"

"Have you got any of your bunko money left after your advertising campaign?"

"The money is beginning to come in—it all looks promising, but I am short just now."

"You take this hundred dollars and you get out of this town by the first train. And if you ever mention me, or that you ever lived here, or that any leading citizens ever indorsed you, I'll hunt you up and tie you into a double bowknot. You understand that, do you?"

"I'll be glad to get out of this one-horse town into a wider field. I have discovered my capabilities," stated Colonel Treadwell. He picked up his fuzzy plug hat, stuffed the money in his pocket, and stalked out of the store.

"I say I'm no piker," Hiram informed the sheriff, when they were alone. "You lead me to that caged

catamount, or whatever he is. I've got something to say to him. He may have a heart—or part of one!"

They found the valet on the outside of the door trying to get in, and when the door was unlocked, they found the infuriated invalid wrestling with the knob, trying to get out.

Mr. Look was obliged to shout him down. At last the old showman's imposing demeanor, plug hat, and mighty voice produced the right effect. The stranger listened.

"There's a story goes with this, but you're not going to hear it just now," said Mr. Look. "There's a good deal of talk about proper introductions when you meet gents you've never seen before. I propose to introduce myself right. Make out your bill for time, travel, and all trouble, and I'll hand you the cash. You haven't anything harsh

to say to me in regard to that, have you?"

"No," admitted the invalid. "That sounds all square. But these leading citizens——"

"I'm going to give you a banquet at the hotel this evening, and all those leading citizens will be present. I'll make 'em understand that it will be to their advantage to be there, smiling and friendly. And after that banquet, and when we're all feeling happy and well acquainted, I'll stand up and tell that story I've just referred to. Here's my hand! No fault to find with the general proposition, have you?"

"Certainly not. I believe I know a gentleman when I meet one," said the other, accepting Hiram's handgrip. "But this Doctor Treadwell——"

"Doctor Treadwell will not be there," stated Mr. Look, with decision.



TWO LOVERS SAT BY ME

TWO lovers sat by me and said—
Kiss-broken every word—
"If you were dead or I were dead,"
Not knowing that I heard.

"If you were dead"—her voice was low;
He kissed her lips anew—
"No road so dark or far to go
But I would come to you."

"I could not live"—his accents broke—
"If you must quiet lie."
How long the years since thus we spoke,
Beloved, you and I!

Yet here I sit, and you lie there,
And years come still and go,
And many lovers kiss and swear;
But you and I—we know.

MARY CAROLYN DAVIES.



Captain Barrett's Parrot

By Wallace Irwin

ILLUSTRATED BY HY. MAYER

CAPTAIN BARRET had a parrot,
Quite a charming little critter.
She could imitate George Cohan
Or an engine uphill goin' ;

She could whistle, sing, and titter ;
But the queerest and the dearest

Little stunt the capting taught 'er
Was to holler words that foller
With a gurglin' sound like water :

"Bully story—tee-hee-hee !
Tell another, capting—gee !"

Bein' jolly fond o' folly,

Captin' loved to tell a story.
Every night we sat at table
He'd relate some hum'rous fable

Full o' jokes both gray and hoary.
But when Barret got his parrot,
That there bird behind his seat, sir,

Perched politely till the nightly
Joke was pulled; then she'd repeat, sir:

"Bully story—tee-hee-hee!
Tell another, capting—gee!"

Captin' Barret loved his parrot
When she flattered him so patly.
But one day when he was tryin'
For to sell his ship by lyin'
To a stranger, askin' flatly
Quite a funny sum o' money:
"Price? Just forty thousand dollars.
I've been offered that and proffered——"
Instantly that parrot hollers:

"Bully story—tee-hee-hee!
Tell another, capting—gee!"

Captin' Barret took his parrot,
When he sold his ship at last,
Settled down to landlocked life, sir,
Bought a house and wed a wife, sir.
But when honeymoon was past,
Oft by twilight's gentle shy light
They would sit, him softly talkin':
"You're the only love me lonely
Life has ever——" Whence a squawkin':

"Bully story—tee-hee-hee!
Tell another, capting—gee!"



Youth Takes Its Turn

By Mary Hedges Fisher

Author of "Food and Florinda," "98 Vanderbroeck Street," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY H. F. NONNAMAKER

AT the Saturday night hop, when they met for the first time, Miss Briggs and Mr. Hathaway discovered, as a bond of attraction, that they lived only a few blocks apart, in Brooklyn. Next morning, in the surf, both being good swimmers, that attraction crystallized into downright liking; by Monday afternoon, it was "Myrtle" and "Charlie," and she was wearing his fraternity pin—just to make the other girls envious.

By Wednesday night, growing more serious, she had confided to him that she was employed in New York as a stenographer, and he had reciprocated confidence for confidence, including the amount of his salary and his prospects.

The following Sunday night, escaping from the crowd on the veranda, they became engaged, which, as Myrtle's chum remarked, was certainly "going some"; and, a week later, on the Labor Day evening that marked the end of their holiday, hidden beneath the board walk, not only did they plan the furnishings for their future home, but—this not to be blazoned abroad—the names for all their future progeny. This was a rock on which they almost split, Myrtle being all for a large family, as being so much company for one another, while Charlie contended that two—viz., Charles, junior, and little Myrtle—would satisfy him. Ultimately, they compromised on the number three, though Myrtle still cherished mental reservations.

Myrtle was sitting propped against a post, her white-shod feet daintily

crossed on the sand, while Charlie lay sprawled full length beside her, pilowing his lazy head in her lap. They watched the moonbeams shimmer on the surf, and conversed in baby talk until they laughed at their own idiocy, both being sensible young people, returning to work the next morning. Then—perhaps because their vocabulary of sweetness had run out—silence fell upon the pair.

"It seems too wonderful," said the girl at last, twining her fingers in his curls, "how the course of one's whole life can be changed by such a trifling incident. Just think"—and she shivered—"I almost—didn't come to Asbury Park——"

"Oh, we'd have met, anyway. It was destiny," proclaimed Charlie, kissing her hand.

Myrtle was not so sure.

"But, anyway, it's happened, and with it the dream of my life. I've got some one I love who loves me. I won't have to go to the office any more. I'm going to have a home to run instead of a typewriter. I'll prove that a business girl can make a good wife!"

"Do you suppose your folks will make a fuss?" speculated the young man.

"I think they'll be glad to have me comfortably settled," she returned. "My home has been with brother Will ever since mother died, and, while I pay board, of course, I don't think it makes up to my sister-in-law for the trouble of having me. With the house so small—and the children growing up



Next morning, in the surf, both being good swimmers, that attraction crystallized into downright liking.

—well, it's much more likely your people will do the objecting."

On this point, Charlie was noncommittal.

"A man picks his wife to suit himself."

"Ye-s-s," she conceded. "But—but—it's pleasanter all around, don't you think, if his folks like her? And we mustn't allow ourselves to forget that you belonged to your people long before you met me; that you have been the baby of the family, and it'll be hard for them to lose you. They'll always be welcome in our home. Your dear old mother—we must have her make us nice long visits."

Charlie threw cold water on this proposition by doubting whether she could come without Sarah.

"Sarah — oh, your elder sister? You haven't told me much about her."

Charlie was disinclined to expatiate upon the subject of Sarah.

"There's nothing to tell! She's an old maid—thirty-five years old. Getting a little sot and cranky, like all old maids do. You aren't going to be an old maid, are you, sweetheart?" he demanded, making a sudden sally for her hand.

Myrtle wrenched it away, for the moment not so inspired to spoon as to talk about

Sarah.

"What does she do?"

"Do? Do?" repeated Charlie, with rising inflection. "Why, she keeps house and looks after mother. She's busy enough!"

"Didn't she ever want to get married?"

"Lord, how should I know? Seems to me she did have a beau, 'way back in the dark ages. I remember, now, mother's calling me to keep out of the parlor." This in pleased reminiscence.

Sarah disposed of, "And there's your brother Frank. What is he like?"

For him, Charlie had nothing but praise.

"He's the best ever—not brilliant, you know—never would start anything—but sober, steady, always to be relied upon—that's Frank!"

"Didn't you tell me he was engaged?"

"In a way. He's gone with Lizzie Evans ever since they graduated from Erasmus High together. She's teaching school, and gets a fine salary. I wouldn't wonder if they'd got out of the idea of really getting married. They're the most matter-of-fact couple I ever saw. But then they're both well along in the thirties. Nothing like that for ours! Now, darling, don't let's spoil our last night on the beach by talking about my folks. You'll meet them all to-morrow night!"

Some twenty-four hours later, back again in Flatbush, Myrtle Briggs stood before her dressing table, preparing for the greatest ordeal of her twenty-one years. For Charlie's sake, she wished that she were beautiful—witty—and wise! But the mirror reflected only the image of a rather commonplace little girl, with a snub nose, clear complexion, and rather nice brown hair. Charlie's people would wonder, but no more than did Myrtle herself, what could *he* see in *her*?

Charlie piloted her through devious ways until they paused before an unpretentious two-family dwelling on a side street.

"I just told them I was bringing a friend to call," he prepared her. "I can just imagine the sensation we'll make. Why, they are hardly on to the fact that 'little Charlie' is grown up!"

From the parlor, furnished cheaply in the style of the early '80's—Myrtle only knew that it was very ugly—Charlie's sister came to greet them. She was spare, without being slender. Her hair, which must once have been pretty, was graying at the temples. There was a decided look of Charlie about her; "Charlie," as Myrtle put it, "all faded out."

"Miss Briggs—my sister Sarah," said Charlie in his easy manner. Then, looking about the premises: "Where's Frank?"

"Around to Lizzie's," replied his sister, and was about to tender some further explanation, when, from far off down the hall, came the insistent, querulous whine of an old woman:

"Sarah! Sarah! SARAH!"

As Miss Hathaway flew to obey the invisible summons, Myrtle looked inquiringly at her fiancé.

"Mother," he vouchsafed. "She's an invalid, you know. Hasn't moved farther than from her bed to her rolling chair and back for twenty years. Keeps Sarah on the jump, you bet!"

Miss Hathaway had returned, murmuring something vaguely apologetic, when the click of a latchkey was heard in the front door. Then on the threshold of the parlor appeared a young man whose general appearance was Charlie right over again, and, preceding him into the room, marched a stoutish young woman, with eyeglasses, a pleasant, good-humored face, and the air of being thoroughly at home.

"Miss Briggs—let me make you acquainted with Miss Evans," said sister Sarah.

The newcomer smiled, and extended a warm, pudgy palm.

"One of Charlie's friends? I'm glad to meet you, my dear." And in that instant Myrtle recalled the fact that brother Frank's fiancée was a public-school teacher. Then brother Frank himself entered and was presented; he not only was much older than Charlie, Myrtle saw at a second glance, but he lacked all of Charlie's well-bred air, Charlie's charm, Charlie's poise. Still, she was determined to like him.

Introductions over, everybody became seated, and there was a long, awkward pause. Miss Evans appeared on the brink of starting some interesting topic of conversation in which all might take



Frank Hathaway sprang to his feet and brandished a fist at Charlie.

part, such as "votes for women" or "milk for babies," when Charlie, compassing the whole assemblage, cleared his throat.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he began, laying his hand on Myrtle's shoulder, while that young lady colored prettily crimson, "Miss Briggs and I are—engaged!"

His torpedo exploded, Charlie seated himself, with his arm about Myrtle's waist, and looked about the room as if to say, "Now, what do you think of that?"

Myrtle raised her eyes timidly, to discover that instead of focusing on her, everybody's attention was directed toward Charlie's older brother. Even Charlie himself looked uneasy. There was a moment of calm before the storm burst. Then Frank Hathaway sprang to his feet and brandished a fist at Charlie.

"Frank, Frank!" murmured Miss Hathaway, raising an imploring hand. "Don't, please! Remember mother!"

Frank controlled himself long enough to close the hall door; then he

crossed the floor to confront the lad who stood before him with an air of frightened bravado. Even Myrtle, panic-stricken in her corner, could read his face aright.

"You contemptible young cub!" snarled the older brother. "You miserable cur!"

"Frank! Frank!" This from the two women across the room.

"I'd like to know what business it is of yours!" young Charlie fired back. "I'm of age, and this is a free country——"

Frank Hathaway pounced on the unwitting cause of the domestic cataclysm.

"Miss Briggs—I ask you——"

"She's out of this. She doesn't know our family affairs," sputtered Charlie, stepping in between.

"If she's going to marry a Hathaway, she has a right to know——"

Myrtle found her voice—a feeble, scared little voice.

"Charlie," it said, "I'd like to hear what your brother wants to tell me."

And her fiancé stood aside, like a sullen schoolboy.

"Miss Briggs," began Frank, his manner calming down, "Miss Evans and I were engaged when my father died, fifteen years ago. My mother was already a hopeless paralytic, and he left just about enough insurance to cover the debts and funeral expenses. Charlie, here, was eight years old; Sarah tied to the house—so it was up to me to bring home the coin and keep things going! I've never had the pull—or the education—to qualify for a high-salaried job. Then the kid came along with a notion he wanted to go to college and become an engineer. He won a State scholarship for Cornell, and I hadn't the heart to tell him he couldn't make use of it. So Lizzie and I talked it over—we'd got used to waiting by that time—and decided we might wait a little longer, for we knew he was a good kid, and it would pay to educate

him. So we let him go, and didn't rub it in, not to spoil his four years. He graduated last June, with honors, and did us proud; I'll give him credit for that. Then he rustled around, got a fine job—did he tell you?"

Myrtle nodded, and choked back the tears.

"Now, I put it to you, Miss Briggs—we've stood back all these years, Lizzie and I, to give him his chance. I'm asking you, isn't it up to the kid to do his part? Would you marry him, knowing——"

"Don't you dare prejudice her against me!" blazed forth the younger brother. "Come on, Myrtle! I'm through! Tomorrow I'll pack up and quit the whole shooting match! I'll never again set my foot——"

He strode toward the door, and Myrtle stumbled after him.

"He won't—he doesn't know what he's saying," she said, pleading against his own people the case of her lover. "He'll be sorry to-morrow. He'll tell you so!"

Somehow the strained "good nights" were said, and beneath overhanging trees that skirted the park, Myrtle and Charlie retraced their steps homeward, the width of the sidewalk between them.

"Well," growled the lad, "if you're going to be influenced by anything he said——"

"But wasn't it true, Charlie? For," as he made no rejoinder, "that's all that matters!"

Myrtle trudged along, taking two little pattering steps to each of his long, swinging strides. Now and again, in the light of a street lamp, she caught a glimpse of his set, sully face, and she longed to take him in her arms, to comfort him, to mother him, as one would a naughty little boy whose house of cards has been knocked down. True, it was her house as well, but beside his bitter disappointment, her own didn't seem to matter. Perhaps women—and



Charlie drew a long breath. "I promise!" he said.
 "You'll be proud of me yet!"

she felt herself very much a woman to-night—bore disappointments more easily. She couldn't bear to have him hurt; for, however unreasonable, self-indulgent, and inconsiderate of others he had shown himself, she still loved him—because he was masculine and because he was hers! Wasn't it terrible—to be a woman and to care like that? Did other women—had Lizzie cared like that for Frank all these years? Had sister Sarah—'way back in the dark ages—

But in the meantime, boy, dear, it's our turn to lift the burden—our turn to work—to wait——"

Charlie drew a long breath.

"I promise!" he said. "You'll be proud of me yet!"

"I'm proud of you now!" and beneath the September moon Myrtle's face took on a new look of radiance.

"Don't you see," she said, "that we're bound to win out? We've everything on our side that counts—we've youth—and love—and—hope?"

"Charlie!" she ventured, coming a step nearer. "Charlie, dear!"

"Are you going to throw me over?"

"You silly little boy!" she reproached him lovingly.

They halted by the Briggs cottage, a half block away from the nearest arc light. There was no passer-by to see the girl raise her clinging tender arms, to draw his head down till his lips fastened hungrily on her own.

"Dearest," she whispered, "we've had a wonderful dream, you and I, playing there was nobody in the world that mattered but just ourselves. But the dream is over, and we must put away the little dream house—with the garden—and the babies——"

The lad's arms tightened about her.

"My God!" he choked. "Don't, Myrtle—I can't stand it!"

"But some time," she continued bravely, for he must not guess that her heart was crying, too, "everything will come right. I feel sure of it, and you must feel it, too.

The Circle

By Leigh Gordon Giltner

Author of "The Understudy," "Burned Bridges," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY E. C. CASWELL

CHAPTER I.

THE morning light, skillfully tempered, slanted through a wide east window, touching with delicate emphasis the two faces so arrestingly alike in contour, so subtly unlike in expression.

"Do you think it amounts to quite that, Irene?" deprecated Mrs. Mallory, impressive even in the intimate negligee of boudoir cap and morning gown. "Wouldn't a gift—something rather handsome, of course—serve the purpose?"

"It wouldn't, mother. There are some things money doesn't pay for—kindness like theirs, for instance."

Mrs. Mallory, though in the late thirties, seemed to the casual eye scarce ten years her daughter's senior. Their blond beauty was of a type almost classic, if a trifle cold. But Irene was infinitely lovelier than her mother had been even in youth, and her absolute simplicity made a more inevitable appeal than the other's studied effects and conscious, deliberate charm of manner.

"But, my dear—"

"What should we have done without them, mother? Three miles from the village, the car a wreck, and you and the chauffeur both injured! They took us in and tended you like good Samaritans, though we must have inconvenienced them frightfully—"

"I offered compensation, you remember," Mrs. Mallory stiffly reminded.

"And I'm afraid you hurt them very much by seeming to place a money value

on their kindness. We can't cancel our obligations to the Allens with a gift, mumsie. Don't you see we must repay their hospitality in kind?"

"Really, Irene, I can't say that I do. I should think it could be done without a fortnight's endurance of Lucy's society. The girl's so hopelessly crude!"

"I asked Lucy to visit me, mother, and I couldn't fail to follow up the invitation, even if I cared to—which I don't. I'm anxious to have her, both for her pleasure and mine."

"But are you sure, dear, that it will give her pleasure? Won't she feel ill at ease and out of her element? She's never been away from Perryville and the farm. Think of her *gauche* manner and shabby gowns!"

"Lucy isn't exactly *gauche*, mother—she's only reserved and shy. She's adaptable, I'm sure; and she's certainly better read than I."

"Oh, books!" scoffed Mrs. Mallory. "I suppose she has a certain academic culture, but I've never observed that a knowledge of the classics made for one's social success."

She rose, and trailed her delicate draperies to the window, where she stood for an instant against the light. Then she turned back to concede:

"Lucy's clever, in a bookish fashion, I'll admit, but she hasn't any small talk or social graces. She's painfully awkward and shy. She doesn't dance or play bridge. And her clothes! Irene, they were simply impossible!"

"That's why I'm asking her now, in-

stead of later, when we're back in town. One can manage in summer with shirt waists and tub frocks."

Mrs. Mallory silently shrugged. Irene's manner changed. She said definitely:

"The point is this, mother: I've invited Lucy, and I think we must have her—if you don't mind too much."

Evelyn Mallory was the born executive. She seldom met with opposition on the part of her household to any of her arrangements; but on those rare occasions when her only daughter quietly asserted herself, the mother had learned to give way; and—which is rare—she was wise enough to know not only when, but how, to yield, capitulating with such grace as to wrest victory from defeat.

"Very well, my dear"—her smile was charming—"if you're sure it will give you pleasure to have Lucy here, I'll write Mrs. Allen immediately."

"Thank you, mother."

"And, of course, I shall do everything in my power to make the visit a success; though I confess I'm a trifle dubious—"

"You needn't be, mother. I shan't attempt any large functions or formal entertainments. We'll just have a good time in a quiet way. We'll motor and swim and sail, and I'll ask one or two friends informally for dinner each evening. Stuart and Paul will take us about, and the girls will all be sweet to any guest of mine. Don't worry, mumsie. I'm sure we can give dear little Lucy a beautiful time. And she deserves it, if any one ever did."

CHAPTER II.

Had Mrs. Mallory even vaguely realized the happiness her graceful note would occasion its recipient, she would, perhaps, have written it less reluctantly. Such glittering possibilities as

it adumbrated seldom presented themselves to a dweller in Perryville. Poor little Lucy had been accustomed always to half loaves; so little of pleasure or interest had come into her colorless existence that it was some time before she could yield herself to the rapture of realization.

Like her late father, Lucy was dreamy and bookish, though perforce more practical than he. Ralph Allen, recuperating in quiet Perryville from a breakdown incident to overwork during his senior year at Harvard, had capitulated to the charms of Mary Shelton, the village belle. Under the spell of this infatuation, he had forgotten his ambition to write—he had had really a marked literary gift, his instructors had considered—and had settled down, after marriage, upon the farm of his wife's father. At John Shelton's death, the farm had descended to his daughter; but her husband had known infinitely less of modern-farming methods than of ancient Coptic or cuneiform inscriptions.

Crops had failed; the live stock had dwindled; buildings and fences had fallen into disrepair; and debts had piled up alarmingly. And when, two decades after his marriage, Ralph Allen had succumbed to general discouragement and died, he had left his wife and his two children a heritage only of debt and dilapidation.

Page, the son, exhibited something of the thrift of his maternal forbears; but he was handicapped by lack of capital, and it was a desperate struggle to wrest even a scanty living from the neglected soil.

Lucy, who inherited her father's literary tastes, along with his library, had learned to lighten her tasks with the magic of vision. As she swept and dusted and cooked, she lost herself in happy imaginings, vizualizing herself always as a factor in some archaic romance. While her hands wrought, her

busy brain wove pretty fantasies, airy fabrics spun upon the loom of dreams.

She had few friends; indeed, until the motor accident that had made Irene Mallory an inmate of the Allen home for a week, she had never known intimately a girl of her own age. As she had listened to Irene's casual mention of dances, dinners, motorings, and general good times—none of which she had ever experienced—Lucy had ceased to figure herself as Juliet or Héloïse or Elaine, and had begun to wonder vaguely how it would seem to find herself, in a gown of mist and moonlight, like the creations Irene described, floating to dreamy music; or perhaps speeding, in a low-hung racer, beside some such figure of masculine perfection as her guest's casual allusions to her men friends conjured up.

And now that Mrs. Mallory's letter, like the wand of a fairy godmother, opened the door to enchantment, it did not even occur to this poor little Cinderella to wonder where she should find her coach and four or the more requisite costumes that should make her worthy the favor of the prince.

Happily, the girl did not realize her limitations. With a cheap mail-order outfit, supplemented by some simple blouses and muslins of her mother's making, she was rapturously content. She had few of the dainty accessories dear to the girlish heart; but, never having possessed them, she failed to feel their lack.

CHAPTER III.

Misgivings first began to assail Lucy when, on her arrival at Shoreham, Irene, a radiant vision in white, met her at the steps of the Pullman. A liveried chauffeur held open for them the door of an imposing violet-lined limousine, while another functionary went in quest of Lucy's scanty luggage.

Her ready-made traveling gown struck her suddenly as appallingly cheap

and shoddy in contrast with Irene's tailored linen, and the crude creation of her Perryville milliner looked a caricature of the mode, as compared with the other's smart little French hat. Lucy instantly saw herself as wretchedly ill-groomed and ill-dressed, and not all Irene's unfeigned cordiality served to put her entirely at her ease.

Her spirits sank yet lower as Belcourt, an impressive gray-stone structure, flanked by formal gardens, rose on its terraced height before her. Lucy was no snob, but she had lived always in the most primitive fashion, in the shabbiest of country houses, with a slatternly negro maid and the minimum of luxury or even comfort, and it was not strange that, when admitted by a stately butler to the richly furnished, exquisitely toned interior of the Mallory mansion, she should feel herself, in her shabby costume, distinctly out of the picture.

Mrs. Mallory, in an elaborate dinner gown, drifting down the wide staircase to welcome her, made her feel still further alien, despite the marked graciousness of her greeting. But it was not until the maid who took her in charge, after Irene had ensconced her in the dainty suite that was to be hers, began to unpack her shabby little trunk and to lay out, with an admirably controlled expression, the girl's meager outfit that Lucy appreciated to the full her utter incongruity with her setting.

Marie was perfectly trained, and she would never have allowed herself to asperse by so much as a lifted brow the belongings of a guest at Belcourt; but Lucy's sensitiveness read veiled disdain in the careful way in which the maid shook out the crumpled folds of her ill-made gowns and laid out the celluloid toilet articles, yclept Parisian, which, in contrast with the litter of genuine ivory and gold upon the dressing table, seemed hideously garish and cheap.

Irene had mentioned that a neighbor



Lucy found herself shyly greeting two tall, well-set-up youths.

and his guest would dine at Belcourt that evening, and Lucy, somewhat at a loss, decided upon the plainest of her white muslin gowns. Glancing fearfully at the mirror, after Marie had skillfully dressed her abundant red-brown hair and attired her in the simple frock, the girl drew a breath of relief. She really looked rather nice, she reassured herself—ininitely nicer than in the ill-fitting blue serge Marie had carefully brushed and hung up while Lucy had her bath.

At this moment a light tap came at

the door, and Irene entered. She was wearing the simplest of her evening gowns, a delicate, embroidered marquise, proclaiming itself in every line the creation of an artist. A pearl fillet in her fair hair gave her classic face an added Greek cast. A single strand of pearls lay about her white throat. Lucy threw one swift glance at her hostess, then turned back, with a gasp, to the mirror. In an instant she had recovered herself, but Irene's quick eye had caught her dismayed expression.

She instantly excused herself—to re-

turn, in perhaps ten minutes, minus the pearls and wearing a gown that, despite its exquisite quality, was no more pretentious in effect than Lucy's own.

"It just occurred to me," she explained, "that we might chance to go for a sail or a stroll after dinner, so I got into this."

Lucy was not wholly deceived, but she was grateful.

"I'm sure you'll like Stuart Blair," Irene said, as together they descended the stairway. "He's our nearest neighbor here, and lives just a block from our town house. He graduated in June, and will enter his father's office this fall. His guest"—Lucy fancied Irene's color rose as she spoke of him—"hopes to be an artist some day. He's very talented, they say. He thinks of going to Paris to study, soon."

"Did you mention his name?" asked Lucy, more to make conversation than from any particular interest.

"Paul Chandler Craig," Irene's delicate flush was now unmistakable. "He's summing here with the Blairs—distant cousins of his. I think you will like him, too."

Mrs. Mallory, already in the drawing-room, cast a swift glance of appraisal over the two as they advanced. She recognized instantly what she termed "Irene's quixotic impulse," but: "Not bad," she inwardly approved. "Simplicity suits Irene's type, and the little Lucy girl looks almost attractive. Marie is certainly an artist."

Indeed, flushed from the ordeal of the coldly impassive stare of butler and footman, and the consciousness that Mrs. Mallory was inwardly appraising her, the girl had an effect of prettiness of which her hostess had not hitherto supposed her capable.

"Nice hair," Mrs. Mallory made mental inventory, "fine teeth, fairish complexion, and very good contours. Properly gotten up—"

She broke off to express a courteous

hope that Lucy hadn't found her journey too fatiguing, and that she had been made entirely comfortable.

Then Blevins announced Messrs. Blair and Craig, and Lucy found herself shyly greeting two tall, well-set-up youths, who, to her inexperience, seemed the embodiment of all the dream heroes of her more recent visions. Both were, indeed, fine, clean-cut, well-groomed, upstanding young fellows of the best type of American college youth.

It struck Lucy that Blair was rather the better looking, but it was Craig with whom she presently found herself talking, with a freedom and a naturalness she wouldn't have believed possible; it was Craig who supported and sustained her throughout the ordeal of her first formal dinner; it was Craig who, when she had failed signally in her timid attempt at one of the new dances with Stuart Blair, came to her rescue, and patiently initiated her into the mysteries of the step. And it was Craig of whom she dreamed that night, when, nestling beneath the unaccustomed daintiness of fragrant linen, satin, and lace, she presently fell asleep.

CHAPTER IV.

The next week spelled enchantment for Lucy. She had never dreamed that such an existence was possible—outside of a book. Her every need was supplied; her every wish anticipated. The perfection of skilled service made the machinery of life at Belcourt move without a jar. Every instant was rich in pleasure and experience.

The American girl is nothing if not adaptable. Lucy had speedily been able to reason herself out of her initial sense of incongruity and awkwardness. She was no longer cowed by the imposing functionaries who served her. She grew rapidly accustomed to the unwonted luxuries at her disposal; her maid, her exquisitely appointed suite,

her marble bath, became more or less a matter of course; and, though she did not fail to write her mother or Page daily, she refused to allow herself to think of her return to the little low-browed, dilapidated farmhouse, where life meant drudgery, privation, and utter loneliness.

She learned to dance with a readiness that delighted her self-appointed instructor; she acquired gradually a confidence and an ease of manner that elicited Mrs. Mallory's approval; and her evident joy in the life she was so vividly living more than compensated Irene for having had to do battle to bring it about. Mrs. Mallory had herself suggested that Lucy's visit be prolonged; indeed, she found herself growing rather to like the girl, whose appearance, thanks to Marie's skill, was far from discreditable to her hostesses.

Irene's friends were cordial, and one or two of them entertained informally in Lucy's honor. Once Irene was able to persuade her guest to appear in a quaint rose taffeta, a revival of an ancient mode, just sent down to her by her modiste in town. It suited Lucy's type perfectly, and Stuart Blair, who had been inclined to a critical attitude, frankly admitted her possibilities. Unluckily, Craig stayed at home, with a headache, and so his artistic appreciation was denied the sight of the charming picture she made flitting in her roseate draperies about a flower-set lawn, lighted with varicolored electrics—"a Fragonard figure in fairyland."

Craig was always courteous, always kind, ever solicitous for Lucy's pleasure, with an effect of spontaneity and sincerity that lent his small courtesies an added value; and Lucy, thrilling to the novel delight of countless graceful little attentions, failed, not unnaturally, perhaps, to ascribe them to Paul's inherent courtliness, combined with the hope of pleasing Irene.

He had cared for Irene Mallory from

the instant of their first meeting. She embodied all the ideals of his artist soul. Her beauty was of a type he deified—a classic beauty redeemed from a too icy regularity by an expression singularly vivid and sweet. For him she spelled a realized destiny; his feeling for her served as a spur to his young ambition; she represented to him all inspiration, all aspiration. His dreams began and ended with her.

But Lucy had, unfortunately, not yet learned to differentiate between mere courtesy and a deeper interest; she was too entirely inexperienced to be immediately alive to the subtler shades of manner and meaning. She was living wholly upon the surface, concerned only with the more apparent aspects of the situation, pausing neither to analyze nor to question; existing solely to enjoy.

Blair was, indeed, frankly absorbed in Irene. But Paul Craig's more selfless devotion found vicarious expression in consideration for the lonely girl Irene was striving to make happy; and his purely chivalrous intent was, naturally, not entirely apprehended by the inexperienced little rustic, flung suddenly into the midst of a circle to which her previous experience was wholly alien.

It therefore struck Lucy as quite the logical and natural sequence of Craig's attentions that, on the occasion of her first large dance at the somewhat remote country club, Craig should elect to drive her over in Blair's roadster, while Blair himself accompanied Mrs. Mallory and Irene.

Lucy, attired in her one simple white chiffon evening gown, with Irene's pearls around her slender throat, looked, as she told herself when Marie had completed her toilet with certain characteristically Parisian little touches, "almost pretty." A less biased observer might have omitted the qualification, as Blair carelessly conceded when she appeared.

Thrilled with hopeful anticipations of

pleasures to come, Lucy was in that rhapsodic state in which the most startling phenomena seem mere matters of course. It was quite in harmony with all the magic Irene's generosity had wrought that she should find herself speeding to a scene of brilliant triumphs with this charming youth as her cavalier. Her mood was *exaltée*; she scarcely heard what Craig was saying, or knew what she replied. For the nonce, she was a blissful composite of all the heroines of romance of whom she had read or dreamed.

CHAPTER V.

A sudden sharp report put a period to her dreaming.

"Blow-out!" announced Craig briefly, as he slowed down and sprang out to inspect the damage.

Lucy reluctantly came back to earth.

"Will it take long to—to patch it up?" she queried anxiously, eager to be on her way.

"I think not," he reassured her. "There's an extra tire, and I'll make the change in a jiffy."

They had been trailing the other car at a sufficient distance to avoid its dust. Now Craig wished devoutly for the expert offices of Mrs. Mallory's capable chauffeur. In his immaculate evening attire, he set patiently about repairing the damage, politely expressing his justifiable private opinion of the situation.

In a reasonably short time the new tire was in place, and Craig, warm, dusty, and disheveled, resumed his seat. Lucy drew a long breath as the car shot forward. They might not be late, after all.

At a crossroad, Craig hesitated. He had visited in the vicinity a relatively short time, and he had absolutely no sense of locality. Now, though he disliked to confess it, he found himself a trifle puzzled.

"Any idea which way we turn?" he queried.

"Not the slightest. Or—yes. We drove over to the club a day or two ago, but I didn't particularly notice—I rather think it's the left-hand road—indeed, I'm pretty sure."

"Then we'll chance it."

They did. For miles the road stretched, satin smooth, before them, and Craig ventured to speed a trifle to make up lost time. Then, with the proverbial perversity of insensate things when haste is imperative, a second tire went down. Still preserving his outward serenity, Craig got out. There was no other extra tire, and the puncture would entail, he found, a tedious patching process, a fact he did not enlarge upon to Lucy.

A glance at his watch told him that nearly an hour had elapsed since he had lost sight of the other car. The knowledge spurred him on so effectively that in perhaps fifty minutes they were again on their way. Lucy was game. Her lips drooped a little at thought of the dances she was missing, but she did not murmur.

Craig drove at a reckless rate. The landscape blurred as they sped through the gathering darkness at a pace that justified Blair's pride in the classy little car. Rapidly it reeled off the miles, responsive to their impatience; but still, to their wonder and dismay, the clubhouse failed to appear. A disquieting fear suddenly thrust itself upon Craig's consciousness.

"Do you know," he felt it necessary to say, after a little, breaking it as gently as possible, "I'm afraid—er—that is, I'm wondering if we aren't on the wrong road."

"Oh!" gasped Lucy. "I'm afraid we are. It shouldn't have taken so long to reach—" Then, gallantly: "All my fault. I insisted upon taking this turn—"

"It's my boneheaded stupidity! I

should have known the way, or at least have asked. I'm sorry, Miss Allen."

"Don't be. It's not your fault; and we'll get there in time yet."

"We will—or break all records," he comforted.

He turned the car and started back.

"Perhaps there's a short cut that would put us over on the other pike without the detour," he suggested presently. "I'll ask at the first house we pass."

Inquiry brought encouragement.

"They tell me," he said, returning, "that if we take the first turn to the left, we'll strike the main road in just about half the time it would take to back pedal. No use going round Robin Hood's barn, is there? Shall we take the short cut?"

"Let's!" Lucy agreed, with enthusiasm.

"Short cut" proved rather a misnomer, owing to the state of the grass-grown lane in which they presently found themselves. Paul drove as rapidly as the bad going would permit, but at that the pace was depressingly slow. They bumped along, jarred and shaken, despite the merits of what Blair boastfully called "the sweetest-running roadster in the State." Up hill and down, over boulders, through streams, and across washes, they made their halting way.

Lucy tried gamely to keep up Paul's spirits, and her own, but it wasn't easy. They jolted slowly over the wretched trail, wondering, with growing impatience, how much more of it they must endure.

"I wonder what time it is?"

Lucy could no longer resist voicing the question Craig had been dreading to hear. The car clock had stopped; silently Craig turned his watch that she might see. She gasped.

"Oh," she breathed, "I'd no idea—Why, we're missing—we've missed —" She checked herself. "It doesn't

matter, really, and I'm wholly to blame."

"Oh, we'll make it in time for the second half," he assured her, more confidently than he felt. Even as he spoke, he became aware of a gradual slowing down, a failure to respond on the part of the sturdy little engine. He was no mechanic, and he hoped devoutly that nothing was wrong with the car's internal organs. He talked on blithely to cover the fact that the pace was flagging even more than the roughness of the road necessitated. Suddenly the machine uttered a mournful "chug-chug" of protest—and went dead.

Craig's face showed a little pale in the glare of the electric lights as, for the fourth time, he left the wheel. It was late, later than he cared to realize; they were in a lonely lane, apparently miles from everywhere; and the gallant little car had, for some reason, basely betrayed its owner's boast and its driver's confidence.

He threw back the hood and made a hasty inspection.

"Seems all right," he commented. "Hope it isn't a case of 'get under'—in these togs."

"Perhaps," Lucy suggested practically, "perhaps we're out of gasoline."

"Hardly likely, but I'll see."

He saw—to his sorrow. Lucy had chanced upon the truth. Blair, not anticipating the detour, had neglected to have his tank replenished. There was nothing for it but to admit the truth to Lucy. She took it gamely.

"Don't be so distressed, Mr. Craig," she said gently. "It's not your fault. Let's decide what's to be done. Shall we go in search of gasoline? There must be a house somewhere near."

Craig was thinking rapidly.

"It's a question," he admitted at length. "I hate to leave you here alone, but I don't fancy you'd get far in those." He glanced down at Lucy's dainty satin pumps. "I haven't an idea



A chill fear clutched Paul's heart like an icy hand. "I'm not stopping," he said shortly.

where we are, or how far we might have to tramp. Would you be afraid to stay here in the car while I try to locate a telephone?"

"Not a bit," fibbed Lucy bravely. "But I think I'd rather go with you. I can walk quite well in these shoes—the heels aren't so very high."

"But you might have to trudge miles—over this beastly road. Better stay here. You'll be quite safe. Blair usually keeps a brace of guns——"

"Guns!" Lucy echoed wildly; but Paul was too intent upon his search to

note the quality of the gasping little cry.

"Yes, here they are—and loaded. Now you're all right. Of course you'll not need them, but I'll feel better about leaving you. If you don't mind, I'll jog along."

He tactfully refrained from reminding her how late it was, and what Mrs. Mallory's probable mental state must be.

Left alone, Lucy lived what seemed to her an æon of terror—a few moments, in reality. She had not con-

fessed to Paul that the two loaded pistols only added to her fears; she had an unreasoning horror of firearms, and Paul's implication of a possible need for these did not serve greatly to hearten her.

There was no moon, and the stars flitted intermittently in and out of the clouds, like fireflies at play. There was a hint of coming storm in the atmosphere; a velvet blackness seemed to enshroud her, save where the car lights, projecting themselves into the dense darkness, made a weird vista of the roadway. The stillness was appalling, until a light breeze suddenly stirred the leaves to mysterious rustlings, like stealthy footsteps. Lucy shivered in her light evening wrap. Her eyes clung to Paul's retreating figure.

He had reached the crest of the hill, and was disappearing on the farther side, when some frightened woodland creature, scurrying to cover, rustled the tall weeds and underbrush that bordered the neglected roadway. Lucy's tense nerves snapped like a tautened wire. With a scream, she sprang from the machine, and, heedless of her diaphanous draperies and delicately shod little feet, flew arrow swift up the lane in the direction Paul had taken.

Paul, hearing his name called—the girl's terrified cry carried far in the night stillness—halted and turned. Then, seeing the slender white figure speeding, wraithlike, toward him in the gloom, and realizing that she must have experienced some sudden shock of fright, he hurried back to meet her.

"Oh," she gasped breathlessly, "please let me go with you, Mr. Craig! I'm ashamed to seem such a coward, but I can't stay there alone! I can't, really!"

"Why, of course," he said soothingly. "It's all right. Come along with me, by all means, if you'd rather. Really, I didn't quite like leaving you alone. Glad you didn't force yourself to stay."

"I—couldn't——" Lucy drew a sobbing breath. "I'd rather walk miles—I'd tramp all the way to the country club—rather than be left alone!"

"I'm sure we can't be far from the main road," Paul comforted, "and, in any case, we're sure to strike something soon. Awfully sorry to have let you in for this, Miss Allen."

"But you didn't! It was just chance—not any fault of yours. And it isn't so very dreadful at that. Really, I don't much mind," she prevaricated politely.

And Paul, though not deceived, was grateful for a gameness that spared him tears or hysteria.

Fortunately, the graver aspect of the situation did not present itself to Lucy's inexperience. She was disappointed at the loss of an anticipated pleasure, distressed lest Irene should be anxious, and a little unnerved by her late experience, but nothing more.

Craig was, however, by no means oblivious to a more serious phase of the affair. He knew the world, and he knew Mrs. Mallory, whose attitude he could imagine. That their prolonged absence, if it became a matter of common knowledge, would occasion unpleasant comment, was, he realized, inevitable. He was beginning to fear that, quite unwittingly, he had compromised Irene's friend and guest. He was conscious of no particular fault on his own part; rather it seemed as if circumstances had conspired to force them into this most awkward and embarrassing position. His one hope was that the matter might escape the ken of the gossips, a hope that he realized was likely to prove vain.

CHAPTER VI.

"Look!" cried Lucy suddenly. "Over there—to the right!"

Paul's gaze followed hers. His eyes were gladdened by the sight of a big, brilliantly illuminated structure just visible through embowering trees.

"Good!" he sighed relievedly, quickening his pace.

Lucy inwardly echoed the exclamation. Her feet, in their thin-soled, high-heeled satin slippers, ached from contact with the stony highway, and she welcomed the prospect of succor.

"Must be having a party," Paul remarked, as, drawing nearer, they perceived that lights shone from many windows. "Lucky for us, isn't it? We shan't have to rout some sleepy farmer from his bed at this unholy hour."

As they turned into the wide, winding driveway leading up from the imposing stone gateway, the light streaming from a doorway standing hospitably open beamed a welcome.

"Looks like a summer hotel," Lucy commented, as a sleepy youth in livery threw wide the screen door and admitted them to what seemed to be the office of some sort of hostelry.

Just across from the door they had entered was the desk, presided over by a heavy-set, florid-faced individual, who looked, it struck Paul, more like a bar-keeper than a boniface. Lucy sank wearily into the nearest chair, while Paul addressed himself to this person, who seemed to be in authority. He noted that the man had eyed them oddly as they had entered, and something in the quality of his welcoming smile made Paul vaguely uncomfortable.

Before he could explain his presence, the functionary leaned forward across the desk and spoke in a hoarse, harsh voice, discreetly lowered to a husky rasp:

"Reservations, of course? Name, please."

Mystified, Paul shook his head.

"Oh, it's all right!" the man assured him, with an odious geniality. "Luck's with you. We can fix you up all right. Nice little private suite vacant. Doesn't always happen." Then, leaning closer

and dropping his voice to a hoarse whisper: "Better get the lady out of here *pronto*. Some one's liable to drop in. Guess you haven't been here before. There's a ladies' entrance, you know," with an insinuating leer that made Paul yearn to throttle him.

A chill fear clutched Paul's heart like an icy hand. The suspicion engendered by the clerk's insinuating manner had become a conviction. Yet, at that, there was nothing he could do but state his errand and get Lucy away as quickly as possible.

"I'm not stopping," he said shortly. "We started for the country club, got on the wrong road, and ran out of gasoline. Can you supply us?"

The man looked a trifle incredulous, but answered readily enough:

"Sure fire!"

He summoned a sleepy bell boy and gave him a crisp order, turning back to inquire of Paul:

"How far back did you leave your car?"

"About a mile east of this, I should say."

The man nodded.

"All right. We'll grab a chauffeur and have him run you back. Plenty of cars here at this hour, and any driver'll be glad to pick up a couple of bones unbeknownst to his boss."

"How far are we off the main road?"

"Why, we front right on it! We're at the junction of the roads. You came in at the side entrance." Again he leered meaningly. "Most people do."

"Then this place is——" Paul was practically sure of the answer, but he hoped against hope that his fears might not be confirmed.

"Zoeller's," the man supplied briefly.

The information was adequate. Paul blanched. Unwittingly, he had brought an innocent young girl who had been intrusted to his care to a road house of such evil repute that it had become a synonym for veiled lawlessness and

vice. They were the innocent victims of chance, enmeshed in a net of incriminating circumstance which the caution of conscious guilt would have craftily avoided.

He was sick and stunned with the shock of the discovery. His sole thought was to get Lucy out of this poisoned atmosphere as quickly as might be. He was sure he could rely upon the professional discretion of the man at the desk; but what if they chanced to encounter some one of the sporty youths of his acquaintance who frequented the place? His heart stood still at the thought.

With a short "Hurry things along, please," he was turning to join Lucy, when an inner door opened, and he found himself facing a dissolute-looking youth in evening dress, whom he instantly recognized as one Al Stevens, who was summering at the Chalfonte, in Shoreham. Though he had met him frequently on the links at the country club, Paul had never cultivated Stevens. Both he and Blair, indeed, rated him as a bounder, and avoided him as a retailer of malicious gossip and smoking-room scandal.

That this man, of all others, should have chanced upon him in his present plight seemed to Paul the fitting climax of that luckless evening. Had he been a gentleman, Paul would not have hesitated—or needed—to explain. As it was, he knew perfectly that any explanation he might offer would be received with skepticism. The fact that he and Lucy Allen were at Zoeller's alone after midnight would be sufficient for Stevens.

Had Paul been less engrossed with his own predicament, he might have noted that Stevens was scarcely less disconcerted at the encounter than he. But Stevens' native effrontery came to his aid. Realizing that Paul had no definite knowledge to go upon, he threw him a secret glance of infinite insinua-

tion, swept the unconscious Lucy—almost asleep in her chair—with a look unspeakably insolent and insulting, and then, with an elaborate pretense of non-recognition, odious in its implications, he stepped back through the doorway and disappeared.

Paul's hands clenched till the nails cut into his palms; his jaw set itself like a vise; for a moment he saw red. His immediate impulse was to rush after the cad, throttle him until that insinuating smile died on his sneering lips, and shake him like a rat while he pounded the truth into his base mind and exacted a promise of silence. But he dared not involve Lucy in a road-house brawl, and he knew that, even though Stevens might promise to keep silence, he would tear her reputation to tatters.

With a leaden heart, Paul realized that they were helpless in the fell clutch of circumstance. There was but one thing he could do, and, as the full horror of the girl's position grew upon him, he resolved to do it at whatever cost to himself. He threw the clerk a bill and hurried Lucy out to the waiting car that worthy had commandeered. The borrowed chauffeur proved efficient. In record time he got them back to their waiting machine, filled the tank, pocketed his fee, and effaced himself.

"I think," said the unconscious Lucy, as Paul took the wheel and sent the roadster forward with a bound, "we'd best go straight home. I'm sure it's too late for the country club, and, besides, my shoes are a wreck."

"As you like, of course," Paul heard himself answer mechanically, though, wrestling with a weightier problem, he scarcely realized what he said. "I'm afraid Mrs. Mallory will be anxious. I should have telephoned from the inn."

His voice had a strained, unnatural tone, Lucy recognized. Glancing up at him, she saw that his face was white and set. Of course, she appreciated, he was annoyed to have missed his antici-

pated pleasure; he had had a wretched, vexatious experience, and she had been a contributing cause. His annoyance was quite natural. Still, a vague sense of disquiet, of something unusual in the atmosphere, disturbed her. She wondered why the matter should suddenly have assumed such grave proportions. She tried to think of something to say to relieve the tension, but no words came. She found, indeed, that she must fight hard to repress a rising sob.

Suddenly Craig turned to her, and, quite without preliminary, said quietly:

"Lucy, will you marry me?"

She caught her breath sharply. Her senses refused to register; surely she had not heard aright. She had dreamed her dreams, but never one so beautiful as this. It could not be, it simply couldn't be, in the nature of things, that Paul Craig, the gallant, the good looking, the concededly gifted and fine, was asking her—her, crude little Lucy Allen—to become his wife!

She managed an uncertain little laugh.

"Has this pleasant little jaunt prefaced a life journey?"

"I'm in earnest, Lucy." Craig's tone was grave. "I—I'm very fond of you, dear. Will you be my wife?"



"I know, old chap. I know. I'd hoped for other things for you, myself; but you're not a cad, Paul, and you've got to go through, no matter how it hurts."

She might well have fallen back upon the familiar feminine shibboleth, "so sudden"; in truth, the unexpectedness of the thing quite dazed her. She was trembling perceptibly, and her breath came gaspingly.

"But—what—why—when—" she faltered stupidly.

"Now—at once, if you will," he answered steadily. "Suppose, instead of returning to Belcourt, we drive over to Shoreham and be married at once?"

"But I didn't guess— You'd hardly seemed to think of me— I hadn't dreamed that—that you cared for me—"

"I do, Lucy."

He said it almost convincingly. He even managed a wan smile. Lying was not in Paul Craig's line, but he had made up his mind to lie, if lie he must, like a gentleman. His was the creed of Hafiz:

If there be trouble to Herward—and a lie
of the blackest can clear,
Lie while thy lips can utter a word or a
man is alive to hear.

"I—care for you—very sincerely," he said bravely. "I've cared from the first. I want you for my wife."

A pang pierced him. *His wife!* Not Irene, who meant light and life and love to him, but another—another, whom he scarcely knew, and for whom he certainly did not care. Yet it must be. He tried to remember what the code of the gentleman demanded.

"Lucy, dear, is it yes?"

"But—your art?" she hesitated. "I'd be a handicap——"

"You'd be a help and an inspiration, dear."

"I—— If you're quite sure that you love me, that you want me——" she faltered. "Paul, I love you so! You're all I've ever hoped or dreamed——"

He bent and kissed her.

They were nearing the road house they had lately left. As Paul recognized it, a sickening sense of impotent despair swept over him. Fate had tricked and trapped this helpless girl, and he had done the one thing possible to save her from the odium she had not merited. But it had cost him his hope of happiness.

He turned his eyes away as they passed the entrance. Surely it was fate that had prompted Lucy to accompany him there! Inwardly he cursed the place and the encounter that had robbed him of Irene and wrecked his high ambitions.

At that exact moment, a swiftly driven, low-hung gray racer shot out of

the gateway. Before either driver quite realized what was happening, the two cars were close upon each other; so close that only their presence of mind in throwing on the brakes had saved them from utter wreck. Both machines grated to a sudden stop, but the lamps of the racer were jammed against Paul's fender.

For an instant, the glare of the lights blinded him; then, with a sudden leap of the heart, Paul recognized the driver of the other car. It was Al Stevens—and *he was not alone!*

By his side sat a striking young woman, whom—before she remembered to pull down her veil—Paul recognized as a young matron, also a guest at the Chalfonte, whom he had met once or twice at the country club, and whose husband's notorious jealousy was justified, rumor said, by her indiscretions.

The eyes of the two men met, questioned, challenged, threatened, promised. Paul exulted in the knowledge that Stevens' lips were sealed. Knowing that Paul had recognized his companion, he would not dare to speak. Lucy's good name was saved, and Paul was released from an obligation that had come to him unsought, and for which he had no heart.

A wild thrill of exultation shot through him. He was free—free to return to the girl he loved. Fate, at the eleventh hour, had relented, and released him from a bondage that already galled. He drew a deep, rapturous breath. *He was free!*

But—was he? Was not Lucy sufficiently compromised by the night's adventure, aside from anything that Stevens might have said? Would not the mere fact that she had been out, unchaperoned, alone with him till dawn be incriminating? Would not Mrs. Mallory, and the world she dominated, be inclined to question, and perhaps to eye the girl askance? And there was

always the chance that their visit to Zoeller's might somehow leak out.

Above all—the thought pierced his consciousness like a rapier thrust—had he not pledged himself, his life, to Lucy? He had asked the girl to marry him, and she had consented. Could he, in common decency, betray her trust and fling her back her promise? Whether or not Lucy was compromised, it was certain that he was committed.

He had believed himself always a man of honor. Could he, in honor, tell Lucy the truth and ask for his release? Even as he asked himself the question, he sensed the answer. He had asked Lucy to marry him at once, had told her that he loved her, and she had, in turn, confessed her love for him. He could not hurt and humiliate her by confessing that he had deceived her, even though it had been for the sake of her good name. No, he told himself sternly; he had gotten into the thing and, at whatever cost to himself, he must go through with it.

CHAPTER VII.

Meantime, at the country club, Mrs. Mallory and Irene waited with growing anxiety. As the moments dragged, and Paul and Lucy failed to appear, Mrs. Mallory, ever mindful of appearances, sent Irene with Blair to the ballroom, while she herself kept watch for them on the piazza.

Her annoyance became anxiety, as time passed and they failed to appear. The road was a much-traveled one, and she knew that any accident would have been promptly reported.

There was but one construction, she believed, to be placed upon the delay. It was most unlike Paul to be unmindful of the conventions; possibly Lucy's ignorance of the social code was at fault. It was really too bad of Lucy! Fond though she had become of the girl, Mrs. Mallory had always rather

resented Irene's insistence in the matter of her invitation to Belcourt, and she was very ready to regard the present instance as an evidence of her own wisdom in opposing it.

She parried inquiry with smiling tact, though inwardly she alternately fumed and trembled lest accident, not design, should have occasioned the delay. In any case, it was certainly most awkward. Form and convention were Evelyn Mallory's deities, and their rigid observance almost a religion. Aside from this, Paul Craig was a most eligible *parti*, and certain plans of her own—

Anxiety had entirely superseded annoyance when, at the end of the sixth dance, Irene joined her.

"I can't stand this any longer, mother," she said, a little unsteadily. "I'm sure there's been an accident. I can't stay here dancing when Lucy and Paul may be— Mother, we must go in search of them at once!"

"I fancy," Blair said reassuringly, "that they took the left turn at the crossroads. Paul doesn't know the country very well, and they're probably hung up somewhere miles from everywhere. I think we'd best go and look them up, Mrs. Mallory."

To which Mrs. Mallory, nothing loath, assented.

They found no trace of the missing two on the way home, though each of the trio watched the road with strained intentness. They did not discuss their anxiety, because of the presence of the chauffeur. Parkes was discreet, but it was one of Mrs. Mallory's traditions never to admit, by so much as a glance, her servitors to the pale of her personal concerns. The functionaries at Belcourt were trained automata, apparently blind and deaf to all save orders, but their mistress was not lulled into that false sense of security by which many employers are betrayed into intimate discussion, later—to their discomfiture

—blazoned authoritatively abroad. They dealt in glittering generalities and bro-mides until, arrived at home, Blair followed them into the library. His face, in the light, showed strained and a little pale.

"If I may take the small car, Mrs. Mallory," he suggested, "I'll tell Parkes that——"

"You'll not take Parkes?" Mrs. Mallory spoke with unconscious sharpness. Blair shook his head.

"Better not, I think. I'll just mention that Mr. Craig took the wrong turn by mistake, and is hung up with a shorted generator at a farmhouse on the Creston Road. That's about the straight of it. Something's gone wrong with the car—Paul's no mechanic, you know, so he's pretty helpless—and he's probably tramping the highway in search of a telephone."

"It—there couldn't have been—an accident, perhaps?"

Blair shot a swift glance at the girl as she spoke. She was very pale, and her lips quivered despite her effort at control.

"Sure not! Not a chance! Paul's a crackjack at the wheel, but he's just never bothered to fuss with the mechanism of his machine. I'll wager he's tied up somewhere——"

"But there's been ample time to have telephoned——"

"Oh, I don't know. There's probably no phone within walking distance. I'll wager they're off in some byway. Don't fret, Irene. They're all right, I'm positive. Suppose you try to get some rest."

Mrs. Mallory rose. She had ever a watchful eye to the preservation of her daughter's beauty—and her own. Nothing short of supremest tragedy should rob her of the requisite amount of restoring slumber and the sacred toilet rites that invariably preceded her repose.

"Promise me," Blair insisted, also observant of Irene's strained pallor,

"that you'll both go to your rooms and try to sleep. I'll find them, all right. Don't worry."

Though, as he spoke, he realized that sleep was impossible for one of them, at least, he dissembled his own anxiety and bundled them unceremoniously off to bed, with a cheering promise to "round up the strays and bring 'em home for breakfast."

This, however, he failed to do, though he carefully explored all adjacent highways and byways, for the reason that, even while he searched, Paul Craig, at a parsonage over in Shoreham, was solemnly pledging himself, in the presence of witnesses divine and mundane, to love and to cherish Lucy Allen until death should them part.

CHAPTER VIII.

Its wonted ordered early-morning quiet brooded upon Belcourt, though the household belowstairs was efficiently, astir, when Paul Craig and his bride drove under the porte-cochère.

Lucy's mercurial spirits, soaring to the ultimate of solemn rapture as she had plighted her troth, had suddenly declined. It began to occur to her, as they drove homeward, that what had seemed to her a consummation beautiful and inevitable might strike Mrs. Mallory as ill-considered and indiscreet. As once-before, her heart sank a little when Belcourt, coldly impressive, rose before her.

Something in the absolutely impassive glance of the stately Blevins, who admitted them, brought an involuntary flush to the girl's cheek. She was conscious of no wrong, yet an atmosphere as of something clandestine, secret, seemed suddenly to envelop her like an aura. Dimly she sensed the meaning of that strange disquiet which had oppressed her during the night. She remembered, too, that she must have caused her hostesses the gravest anxiety.

"Wait in the library, please, Paul," she begged, in a half whisper. "I want to see Mrs. Mallory alone."

"Better let me tell her, Lucy," with a stirring of the universal masculine impulse to protect. He had a distinct impression that Mrs. Mallory's reception of the news would not be enthusiastic.

Lucy shook her head.

"No, please. I'd rather." And before he could protest further she had flitted up the stair.

Marie assured her that "miladi was not sleeping," and, after a moment's parley with that august personage, returned to say that Lucy might come in.

Even as she entered the rose-tinted boudoir, the girl felt herself suddenly shrinking before Mrs. Mallory's coldly inquiring gaze, as she had done under the fishy eye of Blevins.

"Well, Lucy?" was all Evelyn Mallory said, but her tone was eloquent. She was reclining against heaped-up lace pillows, a rose peignoir over her filmy night robe. Her face, even in the tempered light of the exquisite room, looked drawn and old.

Moved by a sudden impulse, the girl forgot her doubts and fears, rushed across the room, flung herself down beside her hostess, and impulsively kissed her cheek.

"Oh," she said breathlessly, "it was dreadful, and—and wonderful! We lost our way, and had car trouble, and there wasn't any gasoline—and then—then—we were married!"

"Lucy!"

"Married over at Shoreham, Mrs. Mallory—Paul and I. We——"

Mrs. Mallory's face had suddenly turned to stone.

"Married!" she echoed. "What nonsense is this, Lucy?"

Laughing, trembling, all April smiles and tears, the girl drew from the bosom of her evening gown her marriage cer-

tificate, and held it out for the other to see.

"It isn't nonsense, dear Mrs. Mallory," she bubbled. "It's true. We were married at Shoreham an hour ago. Isn't it wonderful?"

Evelyn Mallory was very pale, but she had swiftly gotten herself together.

"Very wonderful indeed, Lucy," she said icily. "So wonderful that I find it hard to believe. It is difficult to realize that, after the contretemps of last night—a night spent—where, I cannot say—you should suddenly have married a man you've known less than ten days, a man who is palpably in love with another."

Lucy got to her feet slowly. Her stricken face might have inclined a gentler nature to pity, but it left Mrs. Mallory cold.

"I—I don't think I understand——" she faltered. "Does Paul—you mean—does he care for some one else?"

"Is it possible you haven't guessed that he cares for Irene? He has loved her since the moment they met. They were practically engaged. Indeed, it was only in consideration of their youth and Paul's career—— But, of course, such a consideration would have no weight with *you*! You've married Paul Craig! I tell you, Lucy, that you've tied a millstone about his neck. You've wrecked his career and destroyed his promise; and you've wrecked his happiness as well."

Lucy stared at her dazedly, her face ghastly, her eyes dark with horror.

"I—I didn't realize," she said slowly. "He—he said——"

Mrs. Mallory's traditions forsook her; her Vere de Vere repose fell away.

"Of course 'he said'!" she mocked furiously. "Naturally! In common decency, he had to say something! You poor little simpleton, don't you realize that if Paul Craig told you he cared for you, it was only the chivalrous impulse of a gentleman that prompted it? Think



He drew an almost audible sigh of relief at sight of the woman seated on the piazza.

a moment. Is it likely he'd care for you—an uncouth little rustic, with neither looks nor manner? You had—we'll say by accident—spent the night in his company, out on the highway, and to save your reputation he—he perjured himself and sacrificed his happiness and Irene's."

"I see," said Lucy quietly. "I didn't understand at first. Now that I do understand, I can't, of course, take advantage of—of his charity."

"Most certainly not, I should say!"

"He mustn't suffer on my account. What shall I do? Isn't there some way?"

"The marriage can, of course, be quietly annulled, if you wish it; and if you've any degree of pride or self-respect, you will wish it, Lucy. Paul has simply sacrificed himself to a fine sense of honor. He doesn't care for you; he was only courteous to you for Irene's sake. He has loved Irene since they met; she refused to engage herself formally because they were both so young,

and he had his art education to acquire. But I tell you frankly it will be a sad blow to both if you hold Paul to his bond——”

“I shan’t! I’ll do anything you say. Can we keep it from Irene—from every one? The marriage can be annulled at once. I’ll go away—he needn’t ever see me again——”

“That is the very least you can do, Lucy. Irene has been kind to you, and you owe her something. You must see Paul at once. Offer him his release. He’ll refuse, of course, as a matter of form, but don’t be foolish enough to think he will mean it.”

“What shall I say to him, Mrs. Mallory? He—he thinks I—care.”

“Don’t allow him to think so. Tell him it was a mistake—a romantic fancy only. Tell him you don’t care for him, that you regret your marriage, that you want to be free—tell him anything you like. Say that you’ve just realized—— Oh, Lucy, are you utterly stupid and crude? Haven’t you sense and skill enough to set him free without making him feel himself a cad?”

Lucy looked at her vaguely.

“I—I’m sorry,” she said dully. “I’ll do my best.”

She turned and left the room.

CHAPTER IX.

The girl’s dream castles lay in ruins about her, but she did not suffer. She did not, for the moment, even seem to care. She was so stunned that her sensibilities refused to register. That she would presently wake to acute anguish she was dimly aware; just now she was too numb to feel or to even think—save of one thing only. She had, unwittingly, done Paul Craig a lasting injustice; she must right it at once. That was her sole thought, and as she stood gathering herself together for the essay, she conjured up all the countless wiles that inhere in every woman’s nature for the

creating of the exact effect she wanted. Luckily, the baseness of Mrs. Mallory’s insinuation had escaped her innocence; she only realized that Paul had sacrificed both himself and Irene, and she made up her mind that nothing necessity might demand of her would be too much for her to sacrifice in turn.

As she entered the library below, her light step on the heavy Persian rug made no sound. Paul was standing facing away from her, before a rather wonderful portrait, in oils, of Irene, which lent the requisite human note to the richly austere apartment. As she advanced, he suddenly laid his head down upon his arms, as if he would never care to lift it again; and Lucy knew, beyond doubt or question, that Mrs. Mallory had told her only the truth.

The haggard face he lifted, when she spoke his name, was a still further confirmation. A chill hand seemed to clutch her heart, but she forced a smile of sorts.

“Paul,” she proclaimed lightly, as he advanced toward her, “I’ve come to my senses. Have you? Do you realize what a perfectly crazy thing we’ve done?”

He could only stare at her in blank amaze. She was so little like the girl who had lately left his side.

“I’ve been thinking it over, you see,” she went on lightly. “It seemed awfully romantic at the time; now it strikes me as just foolish and indiscreet. I understand now why you suggested the elopement, Paul. I was stupid—and vain—enough not to guess at first. Fancy that!”

“I don’t think I get you, Lucy. Just what do you mean?”

“Oh, don’t bother to pretend, Paul! I understand. It was quixotic of you to sacrifice yourself for me like that—but it was fine, and I appreciate it. But it really wasn’t necessary. I doubt if it ever gets to the gossips. I’m such a

nonentity here that nobody follows my movements. Somehow, I didn't quite see your viewpoint at the time, or I certainly shouldn't have consented. The romance of the thing appealed to me, and I just didn't think——" Her steady smile did not waver, but something warned her to pause for a moment for control of her voice.

"My dear Lucy, don't think of it like that! It wasn't a sacrifice. It was my pleasure——"

"Don't perjure yourself further, Paul. It's dear and polite of you, but it doesn't deceive me a bit. Stupid of me not to have seen at once. But worse than that was my letting myself be so carried away as to quite forget that you cared for Irene. You do, of course?"

"Why, Lucy, I——" he began, and paused. His eyes wavered away from hers. He could not bring himself to the denial.

"Of course"—Lucy smiled—"I knew it—and yet I didn't give it a thought. Somehow, the glamour, the romance of it all obsessed me. I suppose it flattered my vanity to fancy that you really cared. I'm so ignorant of the conventions that it didn't occur to me that you were trying to save the situation—and my good name. It all just seemed beautifully glamorous and poetic and—— But that was last night, Paul. I'm awake now, and in my sober senses, and I realize that I've let you—and myself—in for a wretched mess!"

"My dear Lucy, I——"

"You're too young to hamper yourself with a wife, Paul. It would mean giving up Paris and your career, and it isn't worth it. It isn't as if we cared, either of us; and, of course, we don't. For a moment I rather fancied we did, but it was just the glamour of the setting and the circumstances. We don't——we couldn't possibly! Why, we've known each other scarcely a week!"

Paul smiled gravely.

"It isn't exactly a question of time,

Lucy. I'm told love's a pretty sudden thing, and I assure you——"

"Don't! I shouldn't believe you! You're capable of more polite perjuries than any man I've met. I like you for it, and I appreciate your thought of me, but I'm certainly not going to let you suffer for it. We'll have this silly marriage annulled at once——"

"Lucy!"

"I mean it, Paul. You did your best for me, but I shan't hold you to it. I'm of too little consequence to be gossiped about for more than a day or two, at most. I'm going away at once, and the talk—if there should be any—will die out in a little while. It doesn't amount to a lifetime of unhappiness for you—for us both."

"You mean that, Lucy?"

"I do, indeed! I like you tremendously, Paul—you've been wonderfully kind to me—but as for loving you"—she managed a bubbling little laugh—"why, it's absurd! There's a rustic youth back home—— And of course you don't care about me." She silenced his protest with a gesture and a smile. "You've your career to make, and you mustn't start handicapped. You've been fine and chivalrous, Paul. Be sensible now, and do what I ask. This marriage thing can be quietly annulled. I'll drop out of sight and out of your life, and that will be the end of it. Don't you see it's best?"

To Paul's credit be it said that he offered every possible argument to shake her resolve, but she only smiled and shook her head.

"There's no reason why a mere mischance like that should spoil three lives," she persisted. "What people may think doesn't matter. Mrs. Mallory is tactful, and probably not a dozen people will ever know. In any case, I don't care. I'm going back home, and I'll never see any one here again—so what does it matter?"

"But, Lucy"—a flush dyed his face—

"I feel such a cad, asking you to marry me, then letting you go like this. Isn't there something I can say or do?"

"Nothing, Paul."

"At least"—the flush deepened—"you must let me make proper provision——"

Her own face crimsoned hotly.

"Paul, I beg of you——"

"I'm not affronting you, Lucy. You married me, you remember, and it's my right——"

The girl's eyes flamed.

"Don't say another word, if you don't want me to hate you!" she flared. "I don't want your money, Paul—I'm not a pauper. You've done enough. I won't be put under further obligations. All I ask of you is to let me go free. I—I think I never want to see you again!"

Before he could get himself together, she had turned and left the room.

She left Belcourt that afternoon. He did not see her again.

CHAPTER X.

"Pretty average raw, Paul."

"All of that, father."

"Unfortunate affair all round."

"Most unfortunate."

"And," pursued Craig, senior, a fine, clean-cut, middle-aged man, with curling iron-gray hair, "I'm afraid you didn't exactly shine in it, my son."

Paul surveyed his father with amazement.

"Why, dad, I did my best," he said, in a hurt tone. He had really done all that he deemed chivalry demanded, and his father's speech came as a surprise.

"But *did* you, Paul? Think it over."

"I see. You mean—afterward?"

"Just that, son. You did the decent thing and the right thing when you asked this girl to marry you, but—you didn't go through. I'm afraid you accepted your release rather too readily. How about it, boy?"

"It was her idea, you know. I offered every argument, said everything

I could think of, but when she insisted it was all a mistake, and that she didn't in the least care for me, that seemed to settle it."

Malcolm Craig smoked a moment in reflective silence. Then he said:

"Do you know, Paul, I've an idea our friend Mrs. Mallory had something to do with that? Knowing the lady as I do, I should say it was quite in character. Wasn't there—I seem to have gathered as much—a sudden change of attitude on the girl's part?"

Paul, flushing a little, nodded assent.

"If the psalmist had added to his hasty 'All men are liars'—which wasn't far wrong, at that—a deliberate 'All women are cats,' he wouldn't have gone wide of the mark—though that's scarcely a gallant thing to say. Evelyn Mallory's distinctly feline, and she probably said some pretty catty things to that poor child——"

"Father, you don't imagine——"

"I do, Paul—knowing Eve Mallory. She probably touched up the situation vividly enough—Eve has a pungent style—and made the girl feel like a thief. At that, she was game enough to run a bluff, instead of doing the clinging vine. She must be a good sport, son."

Paul's cigar had gone out, but he wasn't aware of it.

"I wonder," he mused. "Perhaps you're right, dad."

"I'm pretty sure of it, son; and you shouldn't have let—Lucy, is it?—leave you like that. At the very least——"

"I did what I could. Well—perhaps I might have been rather more urgent—— But now that she's gone, what would you suggest?"

"Well, personally, Paul, you must know that your marriage to any one is about the last thing I want. I'd expected to send you to Paris this fall to try out that art idea of yours. I really think you've enough talent to make it worth while. But you've married this



He had had two pictures skied in the Salon and a third hung on the line.

girl, and you've some obligations to her—which, so far, you seem to have side-stepped——”

“What's your idea, sir?”

“Since you ask, I think it's up to you to go to her home and ‘make formal tender,’ as they say in law, of yourself

and all your worldly goods. If, after having consulted her people, she turns you down, well and good. But, in any case—I understand they're in straitened circumstances—you should make proper provision for her.”

“I offered.”

"And she refused?"

"Absolutely. Seemed to feel it an insult."

"Naturally—after her little *séance* with Mrs. Mallory. But you owe her something, none the less, and you must try to make her see it. You're amply able to provide for her on your own, and I'm back of you to any reasonable amount. I suggest that you catch the next train out to Squash Center—or wherever it is she lives—have a talk with her and her relatives, and try to straighten things out."

"You mean I should try to induce Lucy to let the marriage stand?"

"That's my idea. I'm not strong for divorce. I'm old-fashioned, you know. I won't touch this annulment business till you get back."

"Father"—Paul hesitated—"you understand that this isn't—exactly easy for me? I'm not putting up a whine. I got myself into this thing, and I'll see it through. But—there's—there's some one else——"

The older man's keen gray eyes softened. He laid a hand on his tall son's shoulder.

"I know, old chap. I know. I realize just what it means to you. I'd hoped for—for other things for you, myself; but you're not a cad, Paul, and you've got to go through, no matter how it hurts. Have Haskins write you a check, if you're short, and draw on me for any sum in reason. Together, we can manage either a yearly income or a lump sum, as she may prefer."

"I fancy she won't accept either."

"Insist upon it. It's right she should have it—either way. I know what you're up against, but do your best, my boy. That's about our limit in this sorry scheme of things."

CHAPTER XI.

As Paul drove up to the dilapidated farmhouse that was Lucy's home, a sudden pitying tenderness for the girl

whose whole life had been lived in this unlovely spot tempered the bitterness that had been growing within him since he had realized the far-reaching possibilities of his chivalrous impulse in her interest.

An ancient, rambling brick structure, fast falling into decay, with sagging porches, shutters battered by the storms of years, unsightly outbuildings, and a general atmosphere of dinginess and dilapidation, meant home to the girl he had made his wife. What must existence have been in an environment like this? It was wholly foreign to anything in his own well-ordered experience.

"Regular 'moated grange,'" he commented inwardly, as he surveyed the general desolation. "Poor little Marianna!"

It pleased him to note, as he strode up the walk, certain redeeming feminine touches which he fancied were Lucy's own. Flowers bordered the path, hardy perennials abounded, the lawn was carefully kept, vines softened the sagging outlines of the ancient porch, and a glory of golden sunflowers shut off from view the bare, unbeautiful back yard.

He drew an almost audible breath of relief at sight of the woman seated on the piazza. Somehow, the formal word "gentlewoman" seemed best to describe her. She was so exactly that. Her plain print gown was of the neatest; her face was a faded earlier edition of Lucy's; and her manner, in its absolute simplicity and sincerity, was finer than Evelyn Mallory's own.

The simple room into which she asked him was void of offense even to Paul's cultivated taste. The carpet had faded to a harmonious low tone; the furnishings—the room was satisfyingly bare—were good in their way; and the few pictures on the walls, chosen by Lucy's father, whose judgment had been exceptional, did not grate upon Paul's critical art sense.

"You are Mrs. Allen, I presume?" Paul prefaced formally. "I am Paul Craig, of Richmond."

The name, to his surprise, seemed to convey nothing to his hostess, so he added:

"I met your daughter at Mrs. Mallory's country place recently. May I see her, if she's not engaged?"

"I think I've heard Lucy speak of you and of your kindness to her." Mrs. Allen smiled. Paul was puzzled. Was it possible Lucy had told her mother no more than this? There was no slightest hint of consciousness in Mrs. Allen's gracious manner. "I'm sorry, Mr. Craig, but she isn't here."

"Not here! Oh, I'm sorry!" Somehow, he had not counted on that. "But—she'll be returning soon, perhaps? I may wait?"

Again Mrs. Allen smiled—a gentle smile, with a certain quality of wistfulness.

"Lucy has gone East to spend the winter with her father's sister, who recently lost her only daughter. Lucy's lived a very lonely life here, and I feel that a wider vision is essential to her development. She's lived in her books always. I want her to learn to know people. Her aunt has just returned from a long sojourn in Paris, where her daughter was studying. She is a woman of rare culture and charm, and I feel it will be a liberal education for Lucy to be with her."

"But"—Paul floundered, utterly at a loss—"but she—I——"

At this moment, a tall, sunbrowned youth, rustic, but not uncouth, whom Paul identified as the brother of whom Lucy had often spoken, entered the room. Paul rose, and the two stood facing each other appraisingly while Mrs. Allen's gentle voice said:

"Page, this is Mr. Paul Craig, of whom you've heard Lucy speak. He added greatly to the pleasure of her visit to Belcourt, and I'm sure you'll

want to thank him—as I haven't yet done. Will you excuse me a moment, Mr. Craig?" And, on hospitable thoughts intent, she slipped away.

Left alone, the two again looked squarely at each other, and on the instant Paul realized that, though Lucy might have kept her marriage a secret from her mother, Page Allen definitely knew. He proved it by saying at once:

"Mother hasn't been told, Mr. Craig. Lucy didn't wish her to know. She's not strong, and it would distress her. Please don't say anything——"

"I won't, of course, since you ask it; but I came to try—to offer—— I—I'm disappointed that Lucy isn't here," he floundered.

The other eyed him gravely.

"Lucy's decision about the annulment was final, if that's what you mean," he said simply. "You needn't be afraid——" Something in the other's face impelled him to break off. "See here, Mr. Craig, you mustn't think we're ungrateful. Lucy and I both understand and appreciate what you did for her, but she doesn't want you to suffer for your kindness."

"Please don't put it like that! Lucy honored me——"

"It was fine of you to—to try to shield her from gossip, but she feels she can best show her appreciation by—by leaving you free. You've your life to live, and she has hers. Let it go at that. Don't feel any further responsibility in the matter."

"But I must! Lucy's legally my wife, and, whether the marriage stands or not, it's up to me to make provision for her future. My father's a man of wealth, and I myself have independent means——"

Page Allen rose.

"Don't go on, please!" He faced his visitor, his eyes lowering, his square jaw set.

"Oh, hang it, Allen!" the other burst out boyishly. "Don't take it like that!

I'm not insulting you. Don't you see that for the sake of my own self-respect——"

"You must rob me of mine?"

"Not when you get my idea. Now, see here, Allen—man to man—isn't it my right, having married Lucy, to look after her? Try to get my viewpoint. Wouldn't I seem a sorry sort to let her go without even the offer——"

"Well, you've made your offer, and I decline on Lucy's behalf. No"—Page Allen smiled winningly; a smile like Lucy's, Paul thought—"I'm not insulted. It's not a question of outraged Southern pride, or anything like that. I do get your viewpoint, and it's mighty decent of you to make the offer; but Lucy feels, and I feel, that we owe you enough, and we don't care to be further obligated. That's all."

"The obligation's mine."

"No, it isn't. I understand fully, Mr. Craig. I've understood from the start. You've been pretty decent, and we appreciate it. Please add to your kindness by getting the marriage annulled. It's what Lucy most wishes. No one here knows anything about it; no one need ever know. Get the proceedings—whatever they are—over as quickly and as quietly as possible. Then we'll call it square."

"You won't let me do anything? Lucy won't accept an income?"

"Lucy doesn't need it. The aunt with whom she's gone to live is a widow in comfortable circumstances. Lucy will take the place of the daughter she's just lost. Her future's provided for. We appreciate your offer—it was generous of you to make it—but we can't accept it. Thank you very much. Now let's drop it."

"Will you give me Lucy's address?"

"If you don't mind, I'd rather not; and I hope you won't get it from mother. Lucy prefers to just drop out completely. But if you want to send

her a line, in my care; at any time, I'll forward it."

"Then I'll write her now—if I may?"

"I'll see that she gets it," Page assured him, as he took the missive Paul had hastily scrawled. "But it's better to let the thing die. There's nothing to be gained by going on with it. Live your life, and let Lucy live hers. That's the sanest thing, don't you see?"

And then Mrs. Allen came in, and served them tea and little cakes, prattling innocently the while of Lucy, her past, her present plans, and her ambitions for the future, while both her auditors squirmed.

Two days later, proceedings looking toward the annulment of the Allen-Craig marriage were begun.

CHAPTER XII.

Paul Craig, plus a distinctly Gallic shrug and a definite French accent—of both of which he was happily unconscious, having an unholy horror of affectation or a pose—was back from Paris, and located in the metropolis.

During the years of his foreign sojourn he had lived—and learned—much. After a brief season of fluctuation between alternate hope and despair, he had arrived at the knowledge that his instructors found him worth while, and that he possessed, if not genius, at least talent of an order to warrant his father's faith in his future.

He had worked hard and well; had had two pictures skied in the Salon and a third hung on the line; had painted a much praised portrait of a famous French tragedienne; and, since his return to New York, had received enough commissions from the magazines—he worked in various media—to establish his vogue as an illustrator.

He was young, and in radiant health; his mirror reflected a strong, clean-cut, and still boyish face and a fine, athletic figure; he had never known the harass-

ment of poverty, that handicap of the average young genius, and success seemed assured. Life goes lightly when one has youth, wealth, and a vigorous physique, and when one's work spells sheer pleasure; so Craig was able to smile, a trifle wryly, when one morning he found in his mail the announcement of Irene Mallory's marriage to Stuart Blair.

"Rather a knock-out, that," he conceded. "Or—is it? Somehow——"

He leaned back in his chair and lapsed into musing. His smoldering cigar, which he held unconsciously, presently burned his fingers. He let it fall, but did not move. A slight frown of concentration corrugated his brow; his eyes stared unseeing out over a vista of walls and roofs.

"Odd thing, life," he mused. "I find my exact ideal, and make a play for her favor by devoting myself to her friend. Chance takes a hand—and look at the mess!" His handsome face was pale, and graver than its wont.

"There's this," he summed up at last. "Blair's a decent sort, and he deserves her, if any man could. If only he makes her happy——"

He rose, shook his broad shoulders as if to rid himself of some burden, got himself into street attire, and went out.

That night a painting signed by Paul Chandler Craig, for which the artist had scorned the check—in four figures—of a covetous collector, along with some priceless *objets d'art* he had collected abroad, went, with his card, to Mr. and Mrs. Stuart Blair.

Craig was a good loser, but the pang persisted—was to persist for many days to come.

He had gone to Paris the autumn following his ill-starred marriage, his ardor tempered by the fact that he had been forced to leave without any definite assurance from Irene. Contrary to Mrs. Mallory's counsel, he had given

Irene—from whom, somehow, the secret had been kept—the exact facts of his marriage and its immediate dissolution, allowing her to make what inference she would. Even to her he could not, according to his code, enlarge upon the true inwardness of the situation.

He had comforted himself since for her refusal to encourage him to hope by ascribing it to her loyalty to Lucy. Feeling himself legally and morally free, he had ventured to offer his life to Irene; but, though she had not put the thought into words, he apprehended that she regarded it as still belonging to Lucy. Irene's sternly puritanical conscience constantly conflicted with her mother's more worldly code.

The girl had written to him regularly throughout the years of his foreign sojourn, but always in a tone of frank camaraderie that had seemed to accentuate the futility of his hopes.

From Lucy he had heard nothing for more than two years. In reply to the letter he had sent her through Page she had written simply:

I am returning the check you were good enough to inclose with your letter, not because I fail to appreciate your consideration for me, but because you are under no possible obligation to make provision for my future. Our marriage was the merest form, and I hope you will consider it—as I do—a closed incident.

I am happily situated, and in no sense dependent. I have found a new and moderately remunerative interest, aside from which my aunt feels I make adequate return for the kindness she shows me.

I shall be sorry indeed if you permit your generosity to me to in any way prejudice your future. We both have our lives to live, and we must not let this affect them. It was a mistake that we'll try to forget.

Thanking you again for your unflinching kindness and consideration, I am, now and always, faithfully your friend,

LUCY GLENN ALLEN.

His reply had elicited no answer. Nor had she acknowledged a third letter, written on the eve of his departure from the States. But, hearing, the fol-



"Good work!" Craig threw down the manuscript he had been sketching, with a reminiscent smile. "That Shelton chap's a little bit of all right."

lowing spring, of the passing out of life of gentle Mrs. Allen, he had ventured to send, through Page, a formal line of condolence. Lucy had replied briefly, thanking him for his sympathy, and mentioning that Page was taking a long-dreamed-of course at Harvard; that she was succeeding modestly in her work, the nature of which she failed to specify; that she had heard with pleasure of his progress in his art; and that she was sincerely his friend. After that silence had fallen between them.

In the thronging activities and inter-

ests of life in the gay French capital he had, of late, seldom thought of her. He had come, as she suggested, to regard their marriage as a closed incident, and let it go at that.

Occasionally he had found himself wondering idly where Lucy might be, and how she fared—he did not even know the city of her residence; but her image had grown gradually less and less vivid, until he was quite sure that, should he meet her face to face, he would not recognize her. There was still a lingering bitterness against her in

his heart that she had, though unwittingly, come between him and Irene Mallory, of whom he still thought as the world's one woman. He had countless trivial "affairs" in Paris, that city of *affaires de cœur*, but his allegiance to his ideal had not wavered.

And now—— Well, he was still young; he had his work; he had known some measure of success; the future beamed. He had played the game squarely; he had lost; and he was a good enough sport to win or lose without a murmur. He did not allow himself to brood; instead, he threw his energies into his work, achieving in time a sort of lotus calm he called peace. But life had lost something of its savor, and for many days a shadow lay across his face.

CHAPTER XIII.

"Good work!" Craig threw down the manuscript he had been sketching, with a reminiscent smile. "World's better than the usual slush the luckless illustrator's forced to wade through. That Shelton chap's a little bit of all right."

In pessimistic moments, Craig was given to wondering if the magazines trafficked only in banality and gush, or whether it was his unhappy lot to have to illustrate the worst specimens of a prevailing type. The script in hand was like an oasis in a peculiarly barren desert; or, as Craig prosaically put it, "like a ham sandwich after a surfeit of sweets." He had scant patience with the saccharine stuff his editors wished upon him.

But he had seen—and liked—Glenn Shelton's work before one of his manuscripts had been sent him for illustration. He fancied his workmanlike methods, his accurate technique, his clarity of characterization, his soundness and saneness of style; and when Mainwaring had commissioned him to illustrate one of Shelton's stories, he had made a mental promise to give of his best.

That he did not fail in this was attested by the casual mention of Mainwaring, the editor who had "discovered" and exploited Shelton's gift, that Craig's illustrations had vastly pleased the author; and when, later in the season, he was commissioned to illustrate a series from Shelton's pen, it occurred to Craig to write, through Mainwaring, asking permission to call and consult with the author, provided he lived within calling range.

The prompt reply, in a bold, masculine script, advised him that Glenn Shelton would be at home on a stated evening, and would be glad to have Mr. Craig call at suite No. 3, the Vindinossa Apartments, at any hour after six.

Craig was new enough to the business of illustrating to feel a certain degree of interest in the personalities of the authors whose creations he visualized. He was quite sure that Glenn Shelton was young; his work had a freshness and a breeziness a jaded older writer could not have assumed. That he was fine and clean, his work evidenced; and that he lived in New York Craig regarded as a bit of rare good fortune. He was wont to declare that he had a genius for friendship, and he was somehow quite sure that he and Glenn Shelton would be friends.

On the appointed evening, a trim Swedish maid showed him into the tiny reception room of Shelton's infinitesimal apartment. Artistic simplicity and absolute restraint in the matter of ornament and decoration characterized the room; a brass bowl of scarlet flowers struck a single sharp, staccato note of color in the low-toned harmony of rugs, wall, surface, and hangings.

It struck Craig suddenly that Shelton must be a benedict, for an impalpable, but unmistakable, feminine atmosphere instantly impressed itself. He was, somehow, rather sorry. He had hoped for a smoke and a comfortable shop talk, and, of course, a wife——

He was examining, with whimsical interest, an artist's proof of one of his own drawings, when a slight sound caused him to turn and face—not the clean-cut youth of his fancy, but a young woman, whom even his first startled glance proclaimed vividly beautiful.

"Lucky chap, Shelton!" he appreciated impersonally. He had fallen into the habit of almost unconsciously contrasting—to her disadvantage—every woman he met with Irene. Rather dazedly, he found himself conceding that this girl's beauty was infinitely more arresting than Irene's classic fairness. His artist's eye instantly approved the bronze glints in her hair, the texture and tinting of her skin, the piquant profile, the perfect line of chin and throat. Suddenly he became conscious that he was staring unpardonably, as the girl advanced, and, with frank cordiality, gave him her hand.

"I'm Miss Shelton, Mr. Craig," she said pleasantly, "and I'm glad of an opportunity to thank you for the sympathetic way in which you've illustrated my stories. It's wonderfully soothing—your accurate characterization—after some of the atrocities I've had to put up with."

"Thank you," he said bromidically; and then: "I'm afraid I shall have to ask you to give me a moment to get myself together. You see, I'd somehow visualized you as—as a youth, and Mainwaring didn't set me right—"

"He didn't dare. Strictly against orders." She smiled. "I'm disloyal enough to my sex, Mr. Craig, to be distinctly pleased when people discover a masculine quality in my work—"

"You do seem to get the masculine viewpoint," he interpolated.

"Glad. I try to; and I must manage it somehow, for Mr. Mainwaring didn't guess that I wasn't a man till some one presented him at an artist's tea. He doesn't hold it against me—we're great

pals, in fact—but I swore him to secrecy—"

"He kept faith. I came here anticipating a pipe and a chat with the rising young author—"

"I'm afraid the rising young author isn't up to a pipe, or even a cigarette—hopelessly archaic, you see—but as for the chat, she'll be perfectly charmed—conversation being more in the feminine line. About the illustrations for my series—shall you use wash or line drawings?"

For two hours they talked, argued, and discussed an infinite variety of themes, "man to man," as Miss Shelton insisted. When at length he rose reluctantly to go, she said:

"I've been in twice to view the display of your paintings at Berthold's, Mr. Craig. I wish I could discuss them intelligently with you. But I'm crassly ignorant of art."

"I wonder if you'd care to look over them with me?"

"Indeed, yes!"

"I could at least supply inside information as to what each was supposed to represent, a thing the uninstructed observer mightn't be able to figure out for himself. I'm wretchedly afraid of boring you, but if you'd care to go, I'll be charmed to call for you any afternoon."

"And I'll be charmed to go. Shall we say Thursday?"

"Thursday suits perfectly. At three, then?"

CHAPTER XIV.

In the interim, Craig found himself thinking, with a certain quiet relish, of his initial interview with Glenn Shelton and of other interviews he hoped might follow. The girl intrigued his interest and stimulated his intelligence; he told himself that he genuinely liked her, though his thought of her was, in a sense, impersonal.

He still winced at the thought of

Irene. It seemed to him that the pain of loss must lastingly persist; he had accepted the ache of emptiness, the vacuum of the spirit, her absence left as a part of his existence, an enduring hurt that no lapse of time could heal. But he was too sane to encourage a morbid attitude. He forced himself to concentrate upon his work and to close and lock the door upon the memories and hopes that had been the basis of his endeavor. He was the last man in the world to lapse into brooding or melancholia because the winds of fate had overthrown his house of dreams.

He recognized in Glenn Shelton, aside from her beauty and essential charm, a congenial spirit and a possible comrade. That she was a woman, and a beautiful one, need make no difference. He had hosts of charming acquaintances and admirers in the metropolis, but few close friends, and he felt the need of just such sympathetic understanding and friendship as he was sure Glenn Shelton could give, if she willed. Had she been fifty, and a freak instead of her beautiful self, he honestly believed he would have discovered her quality and sought her favor.

She was waiting for him when he called on Thursday, in an afternoon costume that served to accentuate the rather unusual type of beauty that delighted his artistic sense. In the clear light of early afternoon, he was able to find neither fault nor flaw in her coloring. Her eyes were purple rather than blue—"iris eyes," he found himself styling them; her tinting was at once delicate and vivid; and her hair, with its bronze lights, a veritable crown of glory.

"You live quite alone?" The *gauche* question uttered itself instinctively, and quite involuntarily.

"Except for Helga, my maid and factotum. The relative with whom I'd been living died last year. Since then, I've been alone. I suppose it's fortu-

nate in a way. I'm a perfect ogre when at work."

"You don't quite look the part."

"I play it, though, pretty consistently, Helga could tell you. I'm a perfect savage when I'm trying to whip a story into shape. Poor Helga's learned to go about on tiptoe and with bated breath. She might speak to me if the house caught fire, or the heavens fell—not otherwise. And it isn't a pose, really."

"Eccentricity of genius," Craig suggested.

"Speaking of genius, I especially like the genre painting—No. 6, I think—in your collection. Perhaps I'm all wrong—it may be the least worthy, artistically—but I fancy it vastly, though I can't tell you why in the proper terms. I know nothing of art values. Indeed, I'm afraid I'm a hopeless Philistine."

Craig found that, as she had admitted, she knew less than nothing of art; yet she had evidently an instinctive feeling for the best. She praised exactly the right things—though not in the jargon of the schools. It occurred to him that, after all, her intuitive *flair* for the highest, together with her spirit of sympathetic understanding, might mean more to his work than mere technical appreciation and criticism. She seemed to get at his intent, however subtle; and certain shades of meaning that had eluded the critics seemed crystal clear to her trained perception.

"I wish I might induce you to come for tea to my studio some afternoon," he found himself saying. "I know any number of obliging young matrons who'd be delighted to chaperon you. I've some things there—unfinished studies, mostly—that I'd like you to see. I find your judgment very much worth while, Miss Shelton."

"It isn't really. I've neither standards nor knowledge. I probably single out the very least worthy from an artistic standpoint, because they happen to please my fancy—"

"But hasn't some one defined taste as 'merely a matter of personal liking'? It may interest you to know that in every instance you've praised the pictures that were artistically best."

"Mere chance, I assure you. I've no technical knowledge, no conception of color——"

"You've an art instinct that's just as valid, and perhaps more valuable. I don't want to bore you, Miss Shelton, but I shan't be content till you've seen all my products, great and small. I'm inclined to exact a promise——"

"I give it gladly. This experience has been an education—and I needed it! I'm ashamed of my ignorance, Mr. Craig. It will be a charity to enlighten me."

"The charity'll be mutual, then. I'll likely talk shop till you cry for quarter."

"Has it struck you I might retaliate? I used to write verse, you know."

"Reformed?"

"Permanently."

"Then you no longer woo the muse?"

"The muse turned her back on me, so I smile at prose."

"Rather less exhilarating."

"But far more comfortable; and 'the jingle of the guinea'——"

"What a sordid soul!"

"Just that, Mr. Craig. I haven't a spark of genius, or even talent. I'm just a patient, careful craftsman. Mr. Mainwaring will tell you that."

"Only he doesn't. *Au contraire.*"

CHAPTER XV.

Craig did not at once carry out his design of having Glenn visit his studio. This for the reason that he wished first to complete what he meant should prove his masterpiece. A study in oils of Irene Mallory, begun years ago, before his foreign sojourn, suggested a subject upon which he brought to bear

all the young ardor of youth and love, all the trained technique of his later manner, and all the aspiration the girl herself had engendered. He knew his theme so intimately, so dearly; each detail of the girl's classic beauty—the pure Greek contours, the sheer perfection of feature, the clear, cold tones of her flesh tints; and, withal, each subtle nuance of expression, each intimate mood of a rare personality. His brush reveled in countless tender touches, guardedly recording, yet never wholly revealing, the secret of veiled loveliness patent only to the lover's eye. All that he had of art, all that he knew of love, he brought to this, the visible embodiment of his vision, the sole expression his love might know.

Yet his new-found interest experienced no diminution. Its degree at once amused and amazed him. That any feminine influence should even vaguely affect his mood was a matter of surprise. So many women had made the essay—and so signally failed. But this was like no other experience he had known. An ideal comradeship he defined it, nothing more. Glenn soothed, yet quickened, his sensibilities. After an hour with her he returned always to his work with a clearer vision. She knew nothing of the nature of the undertaking upon which he was engaged, except that he was strainingly at work; yet she somehow wordlessly helped.

The portrait, not photographic, yet subtly, singularly expressive, grew apace. It wanted only a few almost impalpable finishing touches. Craig's own critical judgment approved his execution and conception alike. He knew that in point of sheer technique he had never done anything half so fine.

Then, one day on the avenue, he ran plump into Irene in the flesh—very much flesh. Not the idealized Irene of the portrait, not the etherealized creation of a sublimated vision, but a plump and pretty matron, exquisitely gowned



One night in the café of the St. Elgin, he saw her—with Hartley Mainwaring.

and groomed, who greeted him with a joyous cordiality fatal to romance.

She was beautiful still, but there had been a gradual blurring of outline and contour, due to adipose tissue. Her coloring was no less exquisite, though slightly more vivid; her eyes were as lovely as of yore; but the lithe suppleness, the cypress slenderness, he remembered were things of the past. Irene had grown stout.

It is a melancholy fact that not our souls, but our shapes, determine our effects and decide our destinies. Deny it as we will, it is more often the outer visible form than the inner spiritual grace that appeals; of such stuff are crass mortals made.

Irene's nature had developed, had

grown finer and lovelier for the realized love that was hers; the sweetness and generosity of temperament that had manifested themselves in her youth made her now the joy of the fortunate, the solace of the forlorn. She was all feminine and loving and sweet. Yet an access of "too, too solid flesh" was beginning to destroy the lovely lines of her figure and to mar the exquisite curves of cheek and throat. The spiritual beauty survived, but the physical perfection of the past was—perhaps imperceptibly to the lay vision, but very surely to the artist's eye—rapidly going. And Paul Craig was the artist through and through.

In these moments, while he held Irene's plump hands in his and both

babbled joyous incoherencies, the angel shape that had inhabited the innermost chamber of Craig's cosmos stole out and closed the door—never to enter again. A sudden dizzying sense of freedom seized him as the weight of the lost illusion fell away.

Irene and her mother were in town for a few days' shopping, and Craig eagerly constituted himself their squire. He was in a mood of almost feverish exaltation, for which he was wholly at a loss to account. He found vast pleasure in giving up his time, his engagements, himself, to their pleasure; he filled their rooms with flowers, sent them unlimited sweets of every known variety, and took them everywhere. He was a careless boy again, too rapt to pause and analyze his mood.

One evening, the last of her stay in town, Irene said to Paul, with some embarrassment:

"Paul, will you pardon a liberty to long friendship? There's something I'd like to tell you, if I may."

"Not if it's anything you 'feel you ought to tell me as a friend,' Irene." He smiled. "People always begin like that when about to hint that a chap's going off in his technique or losing his feeling for color. Ah, friendship, how many such crimes are committed in your name! A preface like yours usually prepares me for the worst, Irene. But you never were feline, my dear, so I'll take a chance. Tell me anything you like."

"Then—Paul, I don't quite know how to—to say it—"

"Don't mind *me*, Irene." His tone was still light.

"Paul, it's—you'll pardon my officiousness, won't you?—it's that I've seen Lucy recently."

On the word, the high tide of his exhilaration receded. He paled visibly, and his lips set in a tense, hard line.

"May I talk to you about her, Paul? I'd so like to!"

He could not explain the sudden shock of revulsion that shook him. At a touch, Irene had unwittingly toppled over some impalpable palace of dreams. He could not define the feeling or its cause, but he knew that suddenly all the joyance of his mood was gone. Of late, he had well-nigh forgotten Lucy's very existence. Now that Irene had evoked her image, a shadowy tie seemed to bind him to the past, the irrevocable past he had thought dead and done with. He had considered his marriage a closed incident; yet its ghost had risen at this late day to stand between him and—whom? He consciously waived the issue.

"If you don't mind, Irene," he said heavily, "I'd rather not. All that's of the past. There's nothing to be gained by going into it. I don't wish it, nor, I'm sure, does Lucy."

"You're sure, Paul? Quite sure you don't care to hear what I have to say? There's so much I want to tell—"

"Please don't, dear," he said gently. "I know it's your generous thought for my happiness that prompts it—but you're all wrong, Irene. Our marriage was one of those well-meant mistakes that are about as deadly as deliberate crime. I fancy I hurt, rather than helped, Lucy's interests. Though my intentions were of the best, I played havoc generally, and I've felt like a cad ever since. I don't allow myself to think of it. Let's forget it, please."

"That's final, Paul? You mean it?"

"Yes. We won't speak of it again, if you don't mind. It's done with for all time."

CHAPTER XVI.

The shadow that the mere mention of his mistaken marriage had cast across his spirits lingered for days. Meantime, for some reason he could not explain or define, he denied himself the sight of Glenn. The sudden sense of utter vacuity, the appalling emptiness

of life without his daily glimpse of her, should have proved illuminative, but a certain emotion is proverbially blind.

There had been long walks together, suppers after the theater or the opera, at some not too dazzling café; hours given to the study of art and music; and, best of all, long, intimate discussions of books and events, in Glenn's tiny reception room or still tinier workshop. Theirs had been a fine, free, sexless friendship, and he missed it. Without it, life suddenly went stale.

In time, the shadow lifted. His yearning for an hour in Glenn's gracious presence grew so keen that he realized the uselessness of resistance, and was preparing to surrender when, one night in the café of the St. Elgin, he saw her—with Hartley Mainwaring at her side.

Her face, glimpsed across the low mass of roses that lay like a scarlet stain on the snow of damask and lace, was more exquisite, even, than he had visioned it. In the dazzle of jewels, of rainbow fabrics, of loveliness lavishly displayed, she shone supreme. His heart began to throb tumultuously to the pulsations of the music—a flawless Hungarian czardas, played with gypsy abandon. The warm glow of softly shaded candles illumined her delicate beauty, bringing out each tender detail of contour and coloring. It mattered little that she had not seen him, that her smile was for the man beside her. His impulse called to her. Suddenly she turned her head in his direction. Their eyes met. She smiled. Then he definitely knew.

The knowledge dazed him a little. After years consecrated to an ideal, it was disconcerting to find himself possessed by a feeling stronger, yet subtler and finer, than he had yet known, and swept from his moorings of allegiance out upon a tumultuous tide of emotion such as he had not even imagined. He was shaken, stirred, thrilled, in every

fiber of his being. Somehow, he found himself out in the clear, keen cold of the winter night, under the white glare of electric lights, drifting with the hurrying, laughing throng on the avenue. He moved aimlessly, absently, still dazed with the consciousness that had just fully come to him. It was almost dawn when he sought his apartment.

Late the next morning he woke to a sense of something novel and vaguely exhilarating. Then full realization came, and on the instant he knew a prescient rapture that, whether or not it should find fulfillment, was in itself a recompense for existence.

He called Glenn's apartment at once. Through Helga he made an appointment for that afternoon at five, the earliest moment her engagements would admit.

The hours dragged interminably. His man served him a light *déjeuner*. He ran listlessly through his mail, smoked a cigar, and drifted aimlessly into his studio, with a vague impulse to find momentary distraction in work. As he entered, the light fell full upon the portrait he had painted of Irene, standing as he had left it, uncovered on its easel. An odd smile touched his lips.

He stepped aside to get a better light upon the painting, and for a long moment stood and surveyed it, impartially and impersonally. Viewing it so, his critical judgment still approved. He had done nothing better—probably would never do better work; but its appeal to its creator was now wholly technical. Again he smiled.

"Here endeth the first lesson." He shrugged, and rang for his man.

Two hours later, the portrait went, with a scrawled message on Craig's card, to Stuart Blair.

Later, drifting into his club, Craig encountered Mainwaring just leaving—an imposing presence, with his strong figure, fine face, and graying hair—and Rennison, the club gossip, who knew

every one, and everything he wasn't supposed to know of their affairs. The three chatted casually for a moment, then Mainwaring excused himself and went.

"Fine fellow, Mainwaring," yawned Rennison, "and human like the rest of us, it seems. I'd fancied him invulnerable—but he's taken the count, I'm told.

"Hear he's to be married soon," he replied to the question of Craig's glance. "Oh, it gets us all, in time! Sooner or later every mother's son of us gets the matrimonial bee in his bonnet. I might add that we're pretty generally stung. I'd considered Mainwaring a confirmed celibate, but it seems I missed my guess."

"I hadn't heard." Craig pondered. "Who's the fortunate girl? For she's all that, Tom."

"A Miss Shelton, I believe. Short-story writer, or something in that line. Seems Mainwaring 'discovered' her, and she's since made good. Quite a romance—what? I'm told she's very talented and a stunning beauty. That may be press work, though—that last. The literary ladies I've met haven't been specially strong on looks."

Craig forced himself to make coherent comment and to get away from Rennison without undue appearance of haste. Somehow, he had not taken this sort of thing into account. It had seemed to him that the issue lay between the two of them solely. He had encountered Mainwaring and others often at Glenn's apartment—she claimed the necessary freedom of the professional worker—but somehow he hadn't taken them into his calculations. Rivals had been simply nonexistent as factors in his platonic philosophy. Rennison's unconscious thrust had gone sharply home. The thing seemed incredible, but it might well be true. In any case, he must know. He could not go on in suspense. To find—and to

lose—within the space of a few brief hours! Could fate be capable of such irony?

As he faced Glenn, an hour later, he knew poignantly that, without her, life would be a savorless thing. He had cared for Irene Mallory deeply and sincerely, but his love for her seemed weak as compared with the emotion Glenn had evoked. This was no boyish fancy, but a man's love, real and tremendous and vital, and in its fulfillment lay the meaning of his life.

He tried to force some trivial speech to his lips, but his emotion was too strong to be held in leash.

"I heard this afternoon that you were to marry Hartley Mainwaring," he said, without preface. "Is this true?"

She gazed at him in dumb surprise.

"Wait! That's pretty raw, really! But I've had a facer, and I can't seem to consider the courtesies. Answer me, Glenn. Doesn't the fact that I love you, that I want you for my wife—want you desperately, insanely, wildly—give me the right to know?"

Still she did not speak.

"Glenn"—pain wrung the words from him—"don't you see that you're torturing me? Tell me the worst—I can face it, if I've got to—but the suspense—God! I can't stand it, Glenn!" His face was colorless, his hands tight clenched. "I know I'm raving, but—Glenn, I've got to know!"

Her lips and cheeks were white, but she faced him squarely.

"I've no intention of marrying Mr. Mainwaring, or any one else," she said quietly, "because—I'm married already!"

How he got out of the house Craig never knew. The hours that followed were chaos.

CHAPTER XVII.

"It's come to a show-down, Miss Shelton," Craig was saying grimly. "I suppose what you told me last night spells

the end of things for me. I'm going back to Paris—but I'm not going till I know why. There's got to be a mighty valid reason for my losing you—I won't give up without a fight. You must tell me the whole story."

Glenn Shelton's face was colorless, and there were shadows about her eyes. She tried to meet his gaze, but her glance wavered away from his.

"I——" She faltered, and paused.

"I'm not intruding on your reserve without reason," he went on. "My feeling for you makes it imperative. I've got to know, Glenn—and you know why. It's too late for form and pretense. Married or not, I love you, and shall go on loving you."

She made a little gesture of protest.

"Oh, that doesn't say that I'm going to stick around and make a nuisance of myself. I'll go, if I must; but I'm going to understand why. There's no good in leaving things in solution. Half our plays would end with the first act if their protagonists spoke out frankly. I've no patience with half truths and misunderstanding. I mean to get at the root of this—this incredible thing you've told me. It's a situation that'll stand looking into. You don't mind?"

She shook her head dumbly.

"I'll begin with my part in it. I haven't been entirely frank with you about—about my own status, because I didn't see the necessity for it—till last night. I hadn't waked up to the quality of my feeling for you. But you will believe that I shouldn't have spoken unless I felt I'd the right. I meant, of course, to tell you that—that——" He wasn't finding it easy.

"You mean you are not free?"

"Legally, yes. Morally—I suppose it depends."

"Upon what?"

"On whether you're orthodox. I'm not—to the extent of considering myself bound by a tie fate forced upon both contracting parties. May I tell

you the whole story, and leave it with you to judge?"

"If my judgment means anything to you——"

"Everything!" He forced himself to go on: "Some years ago—the summer before I went abroad—I decided—rather quixotically, it seems, for it afterward appeared that no one knew anything in particular about it—that I'd compromised, through sheer force of circumstance, an innocent young girl—the guest of my prospective fiancée. I did the one thing possible, as I saw it. We were married immediately. And an hour or so later we separated. I haven't seen her since."

"You married her, then, from a sense of chivalry only?" The girl's voice was so low he could scarcely catch the words. "You didn't care for her at all?"

"I'd met her less than ten days earlier. I don't suppose that, prior to the night of our marriage, I'd been with her an hour altogether. I didn't know her in the least. I—frankly, I'd hardly given her a thought. You see, I was obsessed with the other girl—the girl I'd hoped to make my wife. I scarcely even saw Lucy—indeed, I'm quite sure I shouldn't recognize her if we met face to face. She seemed a sweet little thing, but I was mad about another girl."

"And you care for her—for this other—still?"

"Not in the slightest—at least, not in that way. It's a sad comment on masculine constancy, but—it didn't last. I saw her recently—the girl of my young ideal. She's married, in fact, to my best friend. I'm tremendously fond of her in a placid, big-brotherly fashion—but—Glenn, you must know that I care only for you!"

A subtle change crossed her face.

"About my marriage," Craig went on, after a moment. "It was the merest form. My bride shortly informed me

that she regarded it as a mistake, the result of a romantic whim. She stated pretty definitely that she didn't care for me, and that she hoped never to see me again. All my overtures were rejected; my letters went unanswered; she has refused repeatedly to acknowledge any obligation on the part of either. In the circumstances, shouldn't you say I'm justified in feeling myself free?"

"Yes," she assented slowly. "I should say that she herself has absolved you from obligation. You owe her nothing. In my judgment, you're entirely free."

He drew a long breath of relief.

"That's how I felt about it, but I feared you mightn't see it so. So that's settled. As to you——"

She colored painfully.

"Suppose we don't go into that, Mr. Craig? I—I'd prefer——"

"We've got to, Glenn. I can't let any faintest possibility get by me. If there's a chance, I'll take it. If your marriage isn't—if you haven't been happy—there are legal measures—— Glenn, let's have the truth, and make it definite. Do you care for this other man—your—your husband?"

Her face went cruelly white; then a vivid, painful crimson succeeded. She forced herself to lift her eyes and meet his steadily.

"Yes," she said simply. "My love for him—for my husband—is my whole life."

His face reflected her pallor.

"That seems to settle it," he said quietly, after a moment. "That's definite enough, I should say. It's back to Paris for me, I suppose. I'll just say good-by, and get it over. Glenn, I——"

He paused, and stood staring at her in an odd, puzzled fashion.

"And yet," he said slowly, "you're

here alone. You care for this man, you say, yet you don't see him. I'm pretty sure you don't hear from him. You don't wear his name, his ring——"

He broke off abruptly. Involuntarily his glance had fallen upon the little left hand lying white against the dark fabric of her gown. Upon its third finger hung loosely—it was absurdly large for her—a man's class ring of singularly odd design.

He caught her hand in a sudden savage grip and bent to look more closely. There could be no mistake. The ring was his own. His gaze leaped to her face; his eyes met and held. Both were breathless and desperately white. Holding her hands in a grip unconsciously cruel, he scanned her features with a frantic eagerness, scarcely conscious of the words she was equally unconscious of saying:

"I forgot to give it back—at the time. Later, I found—I couldn't."

He gazed at her an instant longer, as if to pierce the veil the years had flung about her. Then——

"Lucy!" he cried electrically. "*Lucy!*"

He freed her hands and stood gazing at her, an odd complex of doubt, uncertainty, and rapture on his face.

"Lucy—my wife—all these years—and I didn't guess! What a dolt I've been! But you didn't speak, Lucy——"

"Can't you guess why?" she flared.

"Don't you see that I couldn't be taken on sufferance a second time? I had to be sure——"

"Sure!" he scoffed. "Great Jove! When I've been half mad——"

He caught her hands again, in a close, masterful clasp. The light of a joy almost fierce flamed in his face.

"Sure?" he said again, as he swept her to him. "Oh, Lucy, girl, I mean to put in the rest of my life convincing you!"



“Ave, Maria!”

By Errol Revel

SUNDAY is like every other day in the respect that events do not recognize its aloofness. The course of things cannot be halted merely because men have been commanded to set aside one day in seven as a period of rest.

So thought Pritchard, of the chorus, as he leaned against the rail of the liner *Messina*, three days out of New York harbor. This had been indeed a day of rest for him—a day of joy.

It mattered not that Peruzzo, the manager of the Metz Grand Opera Company, which was returning home after a successful season in the United States and Canada, had that morning intimated that next winter he, Pritchard, of the chorus, might be given a chance to make his début. He had heard the same thing several times during the past three years, but the chance referred to had never been forthcoming. Others had come forward and taken the place that should have been his.

But what did that matter when little Lena, of the chorus, smiled as she passed him on the deck? Had they not spent a happy day together, beginning with the choral service which the company had made out of the usual miserable attempt at divine worship?

The evening was fine, and all about him on the deck were the men and women of his kind. Many of them, like

himself, were chorus singers; but against the rail near him leaned the lyric tenor, bandying raileries with the contralto prima, and through the haze which was beginning to set in Pritchard could see the glow of a cigar as Peruzzo pulled on it between attempts at conversation with the great basso, the favorite of two continents.

Condari, who had a place beside him in the chorus, came up with the news that they were in the vicinity of an iceberg, and that the ship would slow down until the fog, which was increasing, should lift from the warm sea. He tried to make his companion talk, but there was only one person on board who might have dispelled Pritchard's philosophic mood, and she was walking with a number of her fellows of the chorus. So Condari turned away, wondering at his friend's abruptness.

It was the slack season of the year, when all the transatlantic lines reduce their rates. Otherwise Peruzzo would have made every one except his primas and a few others travel in the second cabin. But he had succeeded in shipping the whole company for little more than the ordinary price of his virtuosos alone, for there were only ten or twelve other first-cabin passengers. These were all nonentities, of the class whose arrival or departure is never reported in the newspapers.

Two of these passed near Pritchard

where he stood leaning against the rail. They were women of the primmest type and they wore their best Sunday expressions, which amused him immensely. Lena and her companions had gone below, and presently from the saloon came the sound of a piano, and of voices singing one of the hymns with which everybody, whether English speaking or otherwise, is familiar. The solemn-faced passengers hastened below to join in the music, and soon Pritchard's trained ear caught the sound of a harsh voice singing in uneven time; so he knew that one of the pair was either arrogant or devotional enough to sing without shame in the company of professionals.

Suddenly the hymn ceased in the middle of a measure, and, because he knew that Lena was there, he started below to find out what had happened. As he passed into the upper saloon, somewhere forward a bell began to boom in measured strokes. A sailor went by with noiseless bare feet; that sign alone was sufficient to show what had occurred. The general order for silence had been issued; the captain was taking no risks of a collision in the darkness and the thickening fog. The siren screamed overhead as he went down to find Lena, who, with her companions, had been silenced by a gruff officer.

He remained talking in the saloon with Lena and the others, and that is why he was not on the listening deck when there occurred something that was to alter the course of destiny for him and two others. That was fortunate for him; for poor Condari, who had taken his place against the rail, was hurled overboard by the impact that sent every one staggering to the floor. But this was not known until afterward, when a sailor found his hat rolling in the scuppers, where it had fallen.

Those on deck who picked them-

selves up and had the courage to look over the rail at the black water saw dimly through the fog white faces that went down into the swirling wash as the steamer pushed her way through what had been a fishing smack. The end had come suddenly for the owners of those faces. They had stood with every nerve strained in the effort to locate that warning bell; the lights that had appeared magically out of the fog above them flashed into eternal darkness as they sank, and the sputtering siren screamed for them a requiem—"For Christ—beware!"

Pritchard came up from the saloon five steps at a time. He had left Lena below, with positive orders not to stir until he came for her; but when he turned, amid that scene of disorder and panic, he found her by his side. Then they both knew for certain what they should have discovered before, and he put his arm about her to lead her away. But that was not easy of accomplishment, for on every side were huddled the frightened and helpless passengers, and Peruzzo was struggling in the convulsive embrace of the terror-stricken contralto prima.

On the second-cabin and steerage decks, officers with revolvers were keeping terrified men from trampling on screaming women in their frantic efforts to get to the roofs of the cabins and the 'tween-deck ladders. Farther forward, other officers held at bay the greatest menace of all—the stokers, who came swarming out of the mouth of their hell. But the sailors who guarded the boats made no attempt to lower them, and for an instant men and women paused in gasping perplexity. Then some one cried: "For God's sake lower the boats!" And pandemonium broke loose on the liner *Messina*.

The rush was met by determined men who fought grimly to save their own lives and to prevent others from throwing theirs away. In vain the captain,

with a megaphone in one hand and a glistening revolver in the other, alternately gesticulated and yelled that the ship was safe. No one listened to him, for every one was afraid.

And this nameless fear—which came not through the thought of death, but because men had seen those white faces and had screamed to their fellows—might have brought death behind it had it not been for the calmness of those two who had found each other.

For it was Sunday, and their hearts were singing as their lips had sung that day; also men had died before their happiness had been brought to pass. Therefore Pritchard suddenly lifted up his voice and sang; then Lena, secure in the protection of his arm, sang also; and soon men who had become beasts found themselves listening to the harmonious duet, as the pair cried the triumphant "Ave, Maria!" of Gounod.

It all happened in a few moments, but those moments were sufficient to prove the man who had been found and the woman who had found him. For the fear was checked when the husky-throated passenger joined in the song, and it fled precipitately when the lyric tenor risked his voice in the effort to compete with Pritchard's robust baritone. And then most of the company, obeying the instinct of their training, took up the sweeping, beautiful melody. But the chorus was not sustained, for men and women were still faint because of the thing that had driven them mad.

And so it came about that presently all the voices ceased save one—a pealing baritone that soared on the recurrent "Ave!" And little Lena, of the chorus, looked up with shining eyes at the face of Pritchard—no longer of the chorus, for he had made his début.



VESPERS

AROUND the dusky brow of night
The sunset bound a fillet bright,
And like a priestess at a pyre,
She knelt beside the altar fire.

From dim cathedrals of the hills
The mingled chant of winds and rills
Rose softly on the evening air,
The solemn vesper rites to share.

Slow died the altar's flame of gold;
The face of night, bright aureoled,
In shadow dimmed, as, kneeling low,
She watched the embers' fading glow.

The chanting winds grew still; the brooks
Fell silent in the forest nooks;
And down the world's vast aisles night went
With folded arms and soul content!

ARTHUR WALLACE PEACH.



Illustration from Mrs. Martin's new serial.

"Ostracized"

A LITTLE TALK ABOUT THE NEW NOVEL
BY HELEN R. MARTIN

PART of what we have to say comes so close to being an answer to a number of letters we have received recently that we will start it by giving one of the most representative of them:

DEAR SMITH'S: I have read you for years—more than I like to think of sometimes, for I don't like growing old any more than any other woman. I have been introduced to so many nice people in your pages! The New England folks of Grace Margaret Galaher, the more sophisticated and citified people that Anne O'Hagan and Virginia Middleton write about, the delightful children of Ruth Wilson Herrick, Eden Philpotts, and Mary Patterson—all these are like friends and acquaintances to me. Also, I must confess that SMITH'S has broadened my sense of humor. Never till I had be-

come acquainted with Holman F. Day did I think that I could enjoy humor of the *masculine* kind, real slapstick, knockabout humor—but I do enjoy it, and I think I am better and know more and have broader sympathies for the reading of the stories. But what I really want to say is about Helen R. Martin. I read her first big book when it was brought out by the *Century* years ago, and needless to say I have read all her stories ever since. I think they all appeared in SMITH'S. Why can't we have more serials by Helen R. Martin? Thanks to your good custom of publishing such big installments, one of her stories lasts only four or five months. And then, for the rest of the year, we must wait without any story by Mrs. Martin. Wouldn't it be possible, just once, for her to write two stories in a year, so that we wouldn't have to wait quite so long? Or is it not to be thought of? Somehow, as I know that we are drawing to the close of "For a Mess

of Pottage," I hate to think that I must so soon bid good-by to all the people in it. It would be an easier farewell if I thought that there was another serial of the Pennsylvania people coming soon. But I suppose that is altogether too much to hope for. Please forgive the long letter. Sincerely,
Galesburg, Ill. ELIZABETH HADLEY.

THERE is no occasion to beg the pardon either of SMITH's or of its editors for such a letter. Such things are the sort of thing we like to have happen to us. And especially does this letter come in at a good time. There is another serial by Helen R. Martin. There is to be no long wait for it this time. It is to start in the next issue of the magazine, to be given in the usual large installments, and it is, to our way of thinking, about the biggest and most interesting story that Mrs. Martin has ever done for us.

THEY say that women are really physically braver than men. Almost any surgeon, almost any trained nurse, will tell you that they endure suffering with greater fortitude. There are some things, however, that affect them more keenly, that they dread with a deeper fear, than any physical suffering. A man, especially if he be a man of strong character, can stand the coolness and disapproval of those around him with less bitterness and anguish of mind than can a woman. The dominant strain in a woman's nature is love and sympathy, and if these are denied her, she is cut off from the very springs of her spiritual life. People say that the woman is afraid of Mrs. Grundy, but that is only a way of putting it. She is afraid to have the women look over her head when she meets them on the street, or the respectable men avoid her. It isn't just the desire to seem respectable, but the deeper and more human

and womanly desire to give and receive love, sympathy, and companionship that makes her dread it so. Any one knows that it is harder for a woman to live down a past, to rise from one social stratum to another, than it is for a man.

THE title of the new serial by Helen R. Martin is "Ostracized." That title describes, as well as one word can do it, the tragedy and pathos in a girl's life shown in the opening situation of the story. Liddy is ostracized through no fault of her own. Something in the past of her parents, something she does not know and cannot learn, makes her an outsider in every group she would try to join. Even the boy who falls in love with her has to meet her in secret. She is a wonderful girl. Brilliant mentally, honest, warm-hearted, and impulsive, her struggle against the awful situation she has inherited holds the interest of the reader from the very start. The story has in it all the makings of a tragedy, but it is saved by the character of Liddy herself. She is one of those rare women—who are not so rare, we hope, as the years go by—who have the strength of soul and mind to rise above circumstances. Liddy herself changes what might have been a grim and sordid tragedy into a stirring and glowing romance. We doubt if any woman, young or old, can read the tale without a glow of generous sympathy and enthusiasm. As we said before, we think it the best story that Mrs. Martin has yet written for us. We are glad to be able to give it to you so soon after the completion of the previous serial. If you have any friend who likes good fiction, be sure to tell her to get the next issue of SMITH'S. "Ostracized" is going to make a place for itself in the fiction of the day, and it is worth while being one of the first to read it.

Water in Relation to Health and Beauty

By Doctor Lillian Whitney

Dr. Whitney is always glad to answer all reasonable questions relating to beauty and health, but she cannot undertake to answer letters which fail to inclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope for reply, or to letters inclosing Canadian stamps. Every week she receives many letters of this sort, in spite of the notice always printed at the end of this department. Sometimes, even, the post office sends notification that letters are being held for her, which careless writers have posted with no stamp. If you have failed to receive a reply to your letter, you may know that it is for one of these three reasons.—EDITORS.

IT is a human quality of which we are all more or less guilty to regard with scant appreciation that which nature abundantly provides; the air, the wind that blows, the sun with its marvelous gifts—heat, light, and color—but above all the beneficence of *water*. While we need each of these to sustain life, we can eke out some sort of an existence without fresh air, without sunlight, but we must have water.

According to scientists, who say that prehistoric man lived in water, it should be as natural to bathe in it and to use it plentifully as it is to breathe, yet the Swede in the following story shows a dislike for this idea that many share with him:

Farmer Brown, while his crew of threshers were "washing up" one morning, noticed among them a Swede who was not engaged in the use of water, soap, and towel.

"Well, Harris," said the farmer, "aren't you going to wash up this morning?"

"Naw," returned the Swede. "It don't make me dirty to sleep."

Our bodies consist of more than seventy per cent water; there is not a single tissue in them, not even that of bone, not even the enamel of the teeth,

into which water does not enter as a necessary ingredient. All of the food we eat contains more or less water, and all of it must be converted into liquid, in the process of digestion, before it can nourish us through the blood, which is itself a watery fluid. Through the kidneys, skin, and lungs, the system daily gets rid of large quantities of waste matter dissolved in water. The body must contain a sufficient amount of water in order that every tissue may develop its full physical character. We refer to persons whose tissues lack fluids as "dried up." They not only look dried up, but they *are* dried up, for the various functions of the system are feebly performed. Their faces are thin, shriveled, or wrinkled; their lives are narrow and restricted, and lived more or less in seclusion; in every respect, they lack the sparkle and transparency of clear water. On the other hand, when the system is supplied with a proper amount of fluids, the cheeks, lips, throat, and limbs are well rounded, the eyes are bright, the skin is fresh, moist, and elastic, and the mental traits are agreeable. The absorbents within, the sweat glands without, the kidneys, all are dependent upon a proper daily supply of fresh, pure water to rid the

system of waste and keep the tissues clean, sweet, and wholesome.

Considering that it is an essential of life, we are remarkably careless as to the *character* of the water we consume. A great many persons never give a thought to the quality of the water they drink, but use whatever is nearest at hand and from the most convenient source! The germs of many diseases lurk in such waters, and since this fact has been hammered into the public mind—regarding typhoid fever especially—more attention is being given to the condition and to the quality of table waters.

Health authorities advise the *boiling of all ordinary drinking water*. This destroys germs and makes it possible and safe to use. During the recent Spanish-American War, our men died like flies from disease-laden water. While this is ancient history, and we do not like to recall it, nevertheless, it does us good to refer to past mistakes, so that we may not blunder in the present.

Goiter, a diseased condition of that highly important gland, the thyroid, is more often than not caused by using limestone water. The treatment is very simple—*boil* the water. In some sections of the country, the only available source contains salts of magnesium and calcium, and is known as "hard" water. Its use renders food less nutritious and less digestible.

When hard water is used for washing, a great waste of soap is caused by the fact that far more soap is required to secure a good lather; a good deal of energy is needlessly wasted, too, in unnecessary rubbing. The effect of hard water on the skin is bad; it does not mingle with the fats that are secreted by the oil glands, and in time the skin becomes dry and yellow. The remedy is to collect rain water for household use or to boil all the water, as by this means the chalk is precipitated—as "fur" on the inside of the utensils used.

Boiling, then, softens and purifies the supply of ordinary household water, and is a precaution every good housewife observes. Sufficient for the day's need can be prepared in the morning, and, when cooled, placed on ice; the temperature of such water is healthier than iced water. Ice contains many impurities, and should be used only for *cooling purposes*.

Good water is a great solvent; it aids digestion by assisting the liquefaction of food and facilitating its passage from the stomach into the intestines, where it further helps in the process of assimilation. Careful people who can do so prefer using, for table consumption, spring waters that are specially prepared for this purpose. They possess some advantages over ordinary boiled water, but their expense must be reckoned with, too. However, they are more attractive and more palatable, and if this is an inducement, especially to women, who rarely drink enough water, then an effort should be made to use a given amount each day. The question is often asked, "Can one drink too much water?" Decidedly! A disproportion of fluids in the system makes the tissues soggy, and excessive water drinkers become obese, indolent physically and mentally.

We must remember that all our food contains water—in varying degrees—that the air contains moisture, and that we should consume just enough to maintain a proper balance. The stomach absorbs little fluid, and for this reason we should not take more than one-half pint at once. Cold is more quickly absorbed than warm, and in many cases a goblet of cold water, taken on arising, acts as a gentle laxative. Four goblets of pure water taken daily is sufficient—beside that contained in our foods. The greatest care must be exercised not to take liquids into the mouth while chewing solid foods, or to wash it down by such means, as this interferes gravely

WATER IN RELATION TO HEALTH AND BEAUTY 1077

with digestion, which begins in the mouth.

Great benefit is derived from the internal use of *hot* water for health purposes. It quickly liquifies *undigested* masses of food, thus relieving indigestion; it dissolves poisons; and by its warmth it stimulates the excretory organs to eliminate those products that are otherwise retained in the system. *It is the retention of waste* that causes nine-tenths of the ills to which flesh is heir, and especially headaches, skin troubles, lassitude, mental inertia, and a train of unpleasant symptoms that make life burdensome and destroy any claim one may have to "good looks." These spring mainly from disorders of the liver and the stomach.

Giving the system an internal hot bath, on arising and on retiring, has a magical effect in all such conditions. Two cupfuls of freshly boiled water, sipped at each sitting for a month or more, will produce astonishing results; but it must be *hot* and not merely warm. In this connection, mineral waters are of great interest. It has been known for ages that they are more potent than drugs. In remote times, before the dawn of civilization, primitive peoples knew the

wonderfully healing qualities of medicinal springs. In Europe, of course, hundreds of thousands were treated yearly at the famous spas, notably Carlsbad and Vichy. The war has directed attention to the fact that in our own country we have mineral waters

equal to any abroad, which deserve to be better known and patronized. Among the best are the Saratoga waters, both natural and mineral, which are now coming back into favor.

It is not necessary to go to any of those springs to secure the waters, as they are bottled and shipped to any point for home consumption. The *salts* of Carlsbad, Vichy, and Kissingen are also procurable, so that one can get very good results by mineralizing ordinary water with them. In all cases where there is an excess of uric acid circulating through the system, one or two

teaspoonfuls of Carlsbad Sprudel Salts, moderately diluted and taken before breakfast, is very beneficial.

The use of mineral waters in gout needs no comment here; they should be taken in large quantities and on an empty stomach. In rheumatism, nervous troubles, obesity—indeed, there is probably no condition in which they would not prove medicinal. For gen-



Simple means for establishing buoyant health.

eral use, especially where a tendency to acidity exists, nothing is better than the daily use of lithia or Vichy waters.

The salubrious effect of salts can also be applied externally, as the ocean is a great reservoir of cold mineral water. Those who can enjoy surf bathing are extremely fortunate. Merely to lave the body in it is tonic; the powerful impact of the waves is tremendously stimulating; the counter activity of the body while in the water exercises every function; while the added benefit of sun and air forms an irresistible combination. When surf bathing is too strenuous, when it is not followed by healthy reaction, it need not be altogether forsworn. An occasional dip when the water is still, followed by a quick walk in the warm sunlight and a brisk rubdown before resting, will improve even those with organic troubles. A sweater should always be donned on emerging from the surf.

Salt water is very healing. All sorts of skin eruptions mend quickly under its influence. The ancients resorted to its use for all kinds of wounds and bruises. Among primitive people, and those living in accordance with old usages, it still forms a sovereign remedy for every kind of ache or ill. Warm salt water acts as an emetic; as a gargle; it is a curative when applied as a douche for catarrhal conditions in *any part of the body*. The injection of salt-water solutions under the skin is a form of treatment daily employed in typhoid fever, which disease, by the way, is almost entirely dependent upon baths and liquid nourishment for its cure.

Surgeons are going back to primitive methods in handling the thousands of wounded men in the present great war. When antiseptics and modern methods gave out, and, indeed, failed, it was found that salt water *cured*. All sailors know that wounds do very well when soaked in sea water.

Very hot water, preferably salt, stops bleeding, cleanses the cut or wound, and prevents blood poisoning. In case of bruises, hot salt water prevents discoloration.

Bathing in the interests of cleanliness is as old as human history. For comfort and well-being, it has until quite recent years been regarded as a luxury. In some countries—Russia, for instance—it is looked upon as a *hardship* by the common people, even to-day. Its value for increasing the healthfulness and *beauty* of the body is not new, but we of to-day are only beginning to recognize the virtues of water for these purposes.

To the aristocratic Roman, daily bathing amounted to a fine art, and the healing qualities of water were so well understood by the ancients that for centuries it was the only mode of treatment in use. The great value of a daily bath for its beautifying effect, through the establishment of better health, should be more fully realized, especially by working people, in whom the necessity for a healthy attractiveness is even greater than in the leisurely; yet an occasional wash, to remove surface grime, is believed by many all sufficient.

It has often been explained in these pages that the skin is a vast and complex organ, covering a considerable surface and performing many functions. The sweat glands, for instance, if placed side by side, would extend for a distance of nine miles; in some parts of the body they are so thick that three thousand occupy a square inch. These glands rid the system of three pints of effete matter daily, when doing their work actively. When they are sluggish, the kidneys are overworked and the blood is not sweet and pure. To cleanse the skin, if for no other purpose than to remove three pints of effete matter, is a daily duty, is it not? But cleansing the skin is only one of the beneficial effects of bathing; every

WATER IN RELATION TO HEALTH AND BEAUTY 1079

function of the body can be stimulated according to the temperature of the water and the manner in which it is applied. Baths are classified according to the temperature of the water. Water is:

Very cold at 32° F. to 55° F.

Cold at 55° F. to 65° F.

Cool at 65° F. to 80° F.

Tepid at 80° F. to 92° F.

Warm at 92° F. to 98° F.

Hot at 98° F. to 104° F.

Very hot at 104° F. and above.

A tepid bath is cleansing only. Friction afterward slightly stimulates the skin; nothing more. This is the temperature most generally employed for the hasty daily scrub. A warm bath is sedative in its effect and is used to soothe the nerves and induce sleep; it is best taken at bedtime.

A hot bath is stimulating; the blood is drawn to the surface, and, after the bath, gradually flows back into the internal organs, augmenting the appetite, facilitating the digestion of food, and increasing body weight. Elderly people thrive well on two or three hot baths weekly, regularly pursued. A flannel robe should be worn afterward, and care should be taken to avoid drafts. Such a bath is best taken at bedtime.

Very hot baths are indicated in many conditions; the Japanese indulge in them for the purposes of general bodily purification and health. Intense heat, such as is employed in Turkish and Russian baths, reduces weight by causing copious perspiration, from forty to sixty times as much as ordinarily occurs. For this reason, extremely hot baths are weakening to some, and dangerous in cases of organic lesions. Those whose strength permits can use no better means for cleansing the system of impurities, for reducing weight, and for overcoming a tendency to stiff joints, muscular troubles, and the like.

With proper precaution, such baths



Cleanse the system internally by sipping hot water.

can be taken at home. The head should be wrapped in a wet towel. One-half pint of cold water sipped during the bath increases perspiration. On emerging from the water, the bather should lie down between warm blankets and remain there until the intense activity of the skin ceases. An alcohol rub on arising closes the pores and hardens the tissues.

Cold water is the greatest physiologic tonic we possess. Very few can tolerate a cold-water plunge, or even a dip, because they fail to react, which means that the blood, after being driven from the surface by the cold water, rushes freely back again, imparting a delightful sense of warmth and well-being. The system can gradually accustom itself to cold water if the tepid

morning bath is cooled off with the addition of cold water, or by means of a shower, the temperature of which can be regulated more easily.

A few minutes under a cold shower is very stimulating, especially if one moves about under it, and it is a capital plan to follow the morning tubbing with a shower and a brisk rub-down. The force of a daily cold-water shower upon the face brings the blood to the surface, refines the skin, and imparts a beautiful natural color to the complexion.

Another excellent way to secure the benefit of cold-water friction is to rub the body vigorously with a coarse towel wrung out of ordinary faucet water. The addition of salt to such a rub-down greatly enhances its value. This is especially useful to those subject to colds. No better remedy exists for this objectionable tendency than douching the chest and back daily with salt water. Salt sweetens and hardens the skin. A strong briny solution, rubbed into the armpits and between the toes, neutralizes the strong odor of perspiration, a condition that causes intense humiliation and suffering when it exists. This simple measure, if rigidly pursued, will cure the trouble. Excessive perspiration can also be overcome in this way.

It is not necessary to have at one's command an expensively appointed bathroom to reap the benefits of cold-water bathing. A pail, a coarse towel, salt, or pure white soap, are humble means toward the same end—the delightful buoyancy of a healthy body. However, women enjoy the luxury of tubbing and the beauty imparted to the skin by the action of softened and perfumed waters, and it must be admitted that nothing accomplishes this so effectually; also that an attractive woman

is doubly so when her skin exhales an almost imperceptible fragrance, the result of immersing the body for ten or fifteen minutes daily in a delicious bath. Women who have neglected themselves in this respect, and whose skin in consequence has become dry, harsh, and discolored, can transform it into creamy, velvety smoothness at trifling cost, with the addition of meals or other inexpensive materials.

Fastidious women love to luxuriate in such baths. Directions for preparing them are available to all readers on complying with the rules of this department.

Answers to Queries

SIXTEEN.—A girl of your age should not rouge. If you are anæmic, you require a blood tonic. Write me more fully about your condition. Meanwhile, drink plenty of milk and live as much as possible in the open air.

DENVER.—Yes, eggs are fattening, but if you are a "breadwinner," do not exclude them from your diet, as they are highly nourishing. Walk to and from your place of employment, and walk at noon. You probably need more exercise and a modified diet.

TESSIE.—Send to me for the name of a liver stimulant and intestinal tonic. You are doubtless very careless in your habits. Use a complexion brush and pure castile soap with hot water followed by cold water. This alone may clean your skin. If not, follow the directions which I will send you for the treatment of blackheads.

STEPHEN W.—Thick lips are frequently induced by mouth breathing. Is this your case? If so, you must have the obstruction in your nose removed so that you can breathe properly. Scrupulous attention to the toilet of your mouth will make it more attractive.

ACNE.—This is a condition that is frequently very obstinate, and many physicians console their patients by saying that *time* will effect a cure. Constitutional treatment is as important as local measures. I will gladly furnish these to you upon application for the same.

Doctor Whitney will be glad to answer, free of charge, all reasonable questions relating to beauty and health. Private replies will be sent to those inclosing a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Do not send Canadian stamps or coins. Address: Beauty Department, SMITH'S MAGAZINE, 79 Seventh Avenue, New York.

DIAMONDS

ON CREDIT - \$
TERMS AS LOW AS

250

AMONTH

Diamond Rings

Wonderfully brilliant Genuine Diamonds, any style solid gold mountings; also Diamond La Vallieres, Ear Screws, Brooches, Scarf Pins, Studs, etc., on credit terms as low as \$2.50 a month.

The Young Man's Favorite Diamond Ring

Send for Jewelry Catalog No. 57

containing over 2,000 beautiful illustrations of Diamonds, Watches, Artistic Jewelry, Silverware, Cut Glass, etc. Select anything desired, either for personal wear, or for a gift to friend or loved one, then ask us to send the selection for your examination. It will be sent, all charges prepaid by us.

YOU PAY NOTHING—NOT ONE CENT

until you see and examine the article right in your own hands. If you like it, pay one-fifth of the purchase price and keep it, balance divided into eight equal amounts, payable monthly. If not entirely satisfactory, return at our expense. You assume no risk; you are under no obligation. Our Catalog tells all about our Easy Credit Plan. Send for it Today. It is FREE.

LOFTIS BROS. & CO., The National Credit Jewelers
Dept. L844, 100 to 108 N. State Street, Chicago, Illinois
(Established 1888) Stores in: Chicago; Pittsburgh; St. Louis; Omaha

DON'T BE BASHFUL

ARE YOU TIMID OR SELF-CONSCIOUS?

Do you blush, lose your nerve and become confused easily? Are you bashful and unsuccessful in love, social or business affairs? Do you lack confidence, courage, aggressiveness, faith in your own ability? My illustrated FREE TREATISE tells how these faults may be promptly and permanently overcome. Write for it TODAY. M. D. BETTS, Box 97, Jackson, Mich.



MAKE YOUR HAIR BEAUTIFULLY CURLY AND WAVY OVER NIGHT

Try the new way—the Silmerine way—and you'll never again use the ruinous heated iron. The curliness will appear altogether natural. **Liquid Silmerine** is applied at night with a clean tooth brush. Is neither sticky nor greasy. Serves also as a splendid dressing for the hair. Directions accompany bottle. Sold by druggists everywhere.

Going up?



HERE is your future charted for you, based on the actual average earnings of trained and untrained men.

Which way will you go—up, through training, to a position that means good money, or down, through lack of training, into the ranks of the poorly paid?

It rests with you. And now is the time to decide. Not next year, not next month, but now. You can get the training that will command a trained man's salary. The International Correspondence Schools have helped hundreds of thousands to qualify for advancement. Let them show you how you can prepare yourself, in your own home, for the position you want in the work you like best.

Just mark and mail this coupon. It will be the first step upward. Mark and mail today.

I. C. S., Box 3452, Scranton, Pa.

CUT OUT HERE

INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOLS

Box 3452, SCRANTON, PA.

Explain, without obligating me, how I can qualify for the position, or in the subject, before which I mark X.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ELECTRICAL ENGINEER | <input type="checkbox"/> ADVERTISING MAN |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Electric Lighting | <input type="checkbox"/> Window Trimmer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Electric Car Running | <input type="checkbox"/> Show Card Writer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Electric Wiring | <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor Sign Painter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone Expert | <input type="checkbox"/> ILLUSTRATOR |
| <input type="checkbox"/> MECHANICAL ENGINEER | <input type="checkbox"/> DESIGNER |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mechanical Draftsman | <input type="checkbox"/> BOOKKEEPER |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Machine Shop Practice | <input type="checkbox"/> Stenographer and Typist |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gas Engineer | <input type="checkbox"/> Cert. Public Accountant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CIVIL ENGINEER | <input type="checkbox"/> Railway Accountant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Surveying and Mapping | <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial Law |
| <input type="checkbox"/> MINE FOREMAN OR ENGINEER | <input type="checkbox"/> GOOD ENGLISH |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Metallurgist or Prospector | <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher |
| <input type="checkbox"/> STATIONARY ENGINEER | <input type="checkbox"/> Common School Subjects |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Marine Engineer | <input type="checkbox"/> CIVIL SERVICE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECT | <input type="checkbox"/> Railway Mail Clerk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contractor and Builder | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architectural Draftsman | <input type="checkbox"/> POULTRY RAISING |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Concrete Builder | <input type="checkbox"/> Textile Overseer or Supt. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Structural Engineer | <input type="checkbox"/> Navigator |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PLUMBING AND HEATING | <input type="checkbox"/> Chemist |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sheet Metal Worker | <input type="checkbox"/> AUTO RUNNING |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHIPMANSHIP | <input type="checkbox"/> Auto Repairing |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> German |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> French |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Italian |

Name _____
Occupation & Employer _____
Street and No. _____

City _____ State _____



This Canoe Brings a Summer Full of Fun

If you want to know what pleasure canoeing is—get an "Old Town." \$30 up will buy an "Old Town Canoe" and you can't beat it at any price. It's safe, graceful and easy to paddle; won't leak or absorb water. 4000 "Old Town Canoes" ready. Easy to buy from dealer or factory. Send for catalog of canoe views and facts.

OLD TOWN CANOE CO., 545 Main Street, Old Town, Maine, U. S. A.



"Old Town Canoes"

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

Agents & Help Wanted

I MADE \$50,000 in five years with a small mail order business; began with \$5. Send for free booklet. Tells how. Hancock, Box 718, Lockport, New York.

AGENTS—Make \$30 to \$60 weekly selling our 300 candle power gasoline table and hanging lamp for homes, stores, halls, churches; no wick, no chimneys, no mantel trouble; costs 1c per night; exclusive territory; we loan you sample. Sunshine Safety Lamp Company, 923 Factory Bldg., Kansas City, Mo.

MEN OF IDEAS and Inventive ability. New list of "Needed Inventions," "Patent Buyers," and "How to Get Your Patent and Your Money." Randolph & Co., Dept. 162, Wash., D.C.

AGENTS MAKE BIG MONEY.—The best line of food flavors, perfumes, soaps and toilet preparations, etc., ever offered. Over 250 light weight, popular priced, quick selling necessities—in big demand—well advertised—easy sellers—big repeaters—100% profit. Complete outfits furnished free to workers. Just a postal today. American Products Co., 3655 American Bldg., Cincinnati, O.

DO YOU WANT a sure job with big pay, easy hours, and rapid advance? Write for my big Free Book D W 23 which tells you how you can get a good government position.—Earl Hopkins, Washington, D. C.

AGENTS—STEADY INCOME. Largest manufacturer of Handkerchiefs and Dress Goods, etc., wishes representative in each locality. Factory to consumer. Big profits, honest goods. Credit given. Freeport Mfg. Co., 30 Main St., Brooklyn, N. Y.

GOVERNMENT positions pay big money. Get prepared for "exams" by former U. S. Civil Service Examiner. Free booklet. Patterson Civil Service School, Box Y, Rochester, N. Y.

"AGENTS—400 Snappy Aluminum Specialties and Utensils, means a sale in every home. General Sales Course Free. \$50.00 a week sure. Answer quick. American Aluminum Mfg. Co., Div. S 49, Lemont, Ill."

Agents and Help Wanted—Continued.

Men—Women, 18 or over Wanted. \$75 month. Government Jobs. Thousands positions. Write for list. Franklin Institute, Dept. F4, Rochester, N. Y.

Business Opportunities

FREE FOR SIX MONTHS.—My Special offer to introduce my magazine "Investing for Profit." It is worth \$10 a copy to anyone who has been getting poorer while the rich, richer. It demonstrates the real earning power of money and shows how anyone, no matter how poor, can acquire riches. Investing for Profit is the only progressive financial journal published. It shows how \$100 grows to \$2,200. Write Now and I'll send it six months free. H. L. Barber, 407, 20 W. Jackson Blvd., Chicago.

BUILD a \$5,000 business in two years. Let us start you in the collection business. No capital needed; big field. We teach secrets of collecting money; refer business to you. Write today for free pointers and new plan. American Collection Service, 18 State Street, Detroit, Mich.

Games & Entertainment

PLAYS, Vaudeville Sketches, Monologues, Dialogues, Speakers, Minstrel Material, Jokes, Recitations, Tableaux, Drills, Entertainments, Make up goods. Large catalog free. T. S. Denison & Co., Dept. 39 Chicago.

Motion Picture Plays

WE ACCEPT Mas. In any form; criticism free; sell on commission; Big prices paid. Details free. Story Rev. Co., 11 Main, Auburn, Pa.

WANTED—New Ideas for Photographs at \$10 to \$100 each. Your "happy thoughts" worth cash. Get free book. Elbert Moore, Box 772 St. 82, Chicago.

WRITE Photoplays, Stories, Poems; \$100 each; no correspondence course; start writing & selling at once, details free. Atlas Pub. Co., 310, Cincinnati.

For the Lame

PERFECTION EXTENSION SHOE for any person with one short limb. No more unsightly cork soles, iron, etc., needed. Worn with ready-made shoes. Shipped on trial. Write for booklet. Henry F. Lotz, 313 Third Av., New York.

Patents and Lawyers

IDEAS WANTED—Manufacturers are writing for patents procured through me. Three books with list hundreds of inventions wanted sent free. I help you market your invention. Advice free. H. B. Owen, 39 Owen Bldg., Washington, D. C.

PATENTS—Write for How To Obtain a Patent. List of Patent Buyers and Inventions Wanted. \$1,000,000 in prizes offered for inventions. Send sketch for free opinion as to patent ability. Our 4 books sent free upon request. Patents advertised free. We assist inventors to sell their inventions. Victor J. Evans & Co., Patent Attys., 767 Ninth, Washington, D. C.

PATENTS Secured Through Credit System. Free search. Send sketch. Book and advice free. Waters & Co., 4307 Warder Bldg., Washington, D. C.

Typewriters

TYPEWRITERS all makes, factory rebuilt by the famous "Young Process;" guaranteed like new. Big business permits lowest prices; \$10 and up; machines rented; or sold on time. Rental to apply on purchase price. Satisfaction guaranteed or money back. Write for catalog. Young Typewriter Co., Dept. 381, Chicago.

Miscellaneous

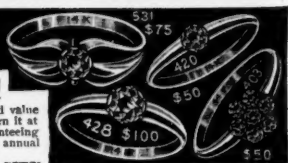
HOROSCOPE CAST—Have past read and future foretold according to the ancient Kabala. Send maiden name, date and hour of birth and \$2 to Anne Brown, Box 3215, Station F, Washington, D. C.

DIAMONDS ON CREDIT

BEAUTIFUL DIAMONDS SENT ON APPROVAL—NO MONEY DOWN

ORDER any diamond from our catalog; we will send it, all charges paid. After you have made a thorough examination and are satisfied, as to the quality and value pay 30% of the price and only 10% per month thereafter. If not satisfactory, return it at our expense. Don't pay a cent until you are satisfied. Certificate furnished guaranteeing the quality of time for any other article at an annual increase in value of 7½%. Send for our catalog De Luxe No. 18. IT'S FREE.

L. W. SWEET & CO., 2 & 4 MAIDEN LANE, NEW YORK CITY



BROWN'S Bronchial TROCHES

New 10c TRIAL SIZE Box



Give quick and continued relief from irritating coughs, hoarseness and tickling in the throat. Contain no opiates. Regular sizes 25c, 50c and \$1. At all druggists.

If your dealer cannot supply you, we will mail any size upon receipt of price.

JOHN I. BROWN & SON
Dept. 32, Boston, Mass.

LOOK IN YOUR MIRROR

You will be convinced and delighted after using

Dr. James P. Campbell's Safe Arsenic Complexion Waters

If you want to restore and preserve your beauty, use this priceless beauty builder and your skin will gradually but surely take on the finer texture and greater clearness and freshness that the steady use of Campbell's Complexion Waters always brings. This wonderful toilet aid is guaranteed to clear the complexion of pimples, blackheads, wrinkles, redness, sallow skin; a new skin appears with the firmness and fineness of youth. Try them. 50c. and \$1.00 per box, sent postpaid in plain cover.

RICHARD FINK CO.,

Dept. 54 396 Broadway, New York



FASTEST BOAT IN THE WORLD

10 to 32 Miles per Hour with 4 to 25 H. P.



17-Footer

\$45

Complete
K. D. Boat

All material fitted—including hardware. \$95 for finished 17-footer ready for motor. *Builder-Agents Wanted.*

LOWEST PRICED BOAT IN THE WORLD

15-Footer

\$25

Complete
K. D. Boat



\$45 for finished boat. \$95 for boat with either inboard or outboard motor installed. Send for free catalog showing 100 boats. **BROOKS MFG. CO.** 5203 Rust Avenue, Saginaw, Mich.

Don't Wear a Truss



BROOKS' APPLIANCE, the modern scientific invention, the wonderful new discovery that relieves rupture will be sent on trial. No obnoxious springs or pads. Has automatic Air Cushions. Binds and draws the broken parts together as you would a broken limb. No salves. No lies. Durable, cheap. **Sent on trial to prove it.** Pat. Sept. 10, '01. Catalogue and measure blanks

mailed free. Send name and address today. **C. E. BROOKS, 1759 B State Street, Marshall, Mich.**



He First Notices Your Complexion

That is the thing that decides a woman's beauty—her **complexion**. That is why you should be particular, very particular about the powder you use.

Does it simply show the **powdered face** or does it mean a **fine complexion**? Is it a **real aid** to skin beauty or is it but an **added complexion woe**?

There are powders and powders, but you will find that the thousands of beautiful women to whom complexion is **not** a problem use

Carmen Complexion Powder

Decidedly different from any other powder. Not a "make-up" in any sense, but a genuine **BEAUTIFIER**. Refreshing—restoring—refining. Transforms the muddy, colorless, rough-tissue complexion into one of apple-blossom beauty. Protects and preserves the freshness and bloom of a delicate skin.

It is not sufficient that a powder look fine in the box or feel fine between the fingers. **The test is on the face!** Does it show powder? Does it rub or blow off? Does it fail under perspiration? Does it fall under strong electric light or glaring sunlight? One trial of **CARMEN** will convince you that it measures up to every possible test.

50c Everywhere
WHITE, PINK, FLESH, CREAM
The Scent Is Dainty

Our "On Trial" Offer

Purse size box and mirror containing 2 to 3 weeks supply of Carmen (state shade) and full size box of Carmen Rouge (light or dark) sent **free** upon receipt of 25c. If only purse size box of Carmen Powder and mirror are wanted, send only 10c silver and 2 cent stamp.



**STAFFORD-MILLER
COMPANY,**
547 Olive Street
St. Louis, Mo.



"There, Mother, Just As You Predicted—"

Missing the "game-ball" right in front of the pocket is only one of the whimsical turns with which Home Billiards abounds. It's part of the frolic to twit the family sharp-shooter. So leave it to mother and the boys to hold their own.

Your family deserves this daily sport and exercise that Brunswick Carom and Pocket Tables are providing for thousands of homes.

Send today for our color-illustrated book of details. *It's free.*

Brunswick "Baby Grand"

"Grand," "Convertible" and "Quick Demountable" Billiard Tables
Now \$27 Up—Pay 10c a Day

Brunswick Home Tables are scientifically built, with accurate angles, fast ever-level billiard beds and quick-acting Monarch cushions—the choice of experts.

Why buy a toy table when a real crown-up Brunswick costs so little? By paying while playing, you never will miss the amount.

Any Home Has Room

Now you can get a genuine Brunswick in any size your home requires. Our "Quick Demountable" fits on top of your library or dining table, or comes with folding or quick-detachable legs.

"Grand" and "Baby Grand"—for homes with a spare room, attic, basement or den—are the finest and fastest in the world.



"BABY GRAND"
Carom and Pocket Billiard Style

30-Day Trial—Outfit FREE

Balls, Cues, Rack, Markers, Spirit Level, Expert Book of 33 Games, etc., all included free with every Brunswick. No extras to buy—no heavy after-expense.

Our plan lets you try the table 30 days FREE. Then pay monthly, as little as 10 cents a day!

Send at once for our widely-read book, "Billiards—The Home Magnet," that shows these tables in realistic colors, discloses factory prices and full details. New edition now ready. Mail the coupon for this valuable book today. It's FREE.

Mail This For Billiard Book FREE!

The Brunswick-Balke-Collender Co.,
Dept. 27E 623-633 S. Wabash Av., Chicago

(512)

Send free, postpaid, your color-book
"Billiards—The Home Magnet"
and tell about your home trial offer.

Name

Address



A Judge Can't Smoke

in the courtroom — but he's going to enjoy his tobacco just the same. He gets a good, juicy chew of "PIPER" — that's the tobacco — *real* tobacco — rich and mellow — and chewing it gives him calmness — "the poise that comes from rumination"! When you chew

PIPER Heidsieck

CHEWING TOBACCO—Champagne Flavor

you get the epicure's delight. The taste of "PIPER" carries with it that wonderfully wine-like flavor which has made the brand so justly famous. It combines with all the natural richness of splendid tobacco the mellow tang of ripe champagne.

Try "PIPER" just one week.

You'll see why thousands and thousands of American men of brains and eminence have used "PIPER" for years.

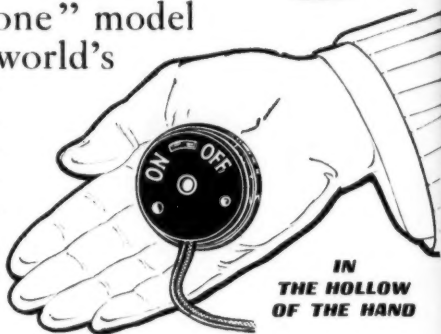
Only finest leaves of choicest tobacco go into the making of "PIPER." We go to the utmost expense to keep this superb tobacco clear up above all others, in a class by itself.

5c and 10c cuts, foil-wrapped, in slide boxes. Also 10c cuts, foil-wrapped, in metal boxes.

THE AMERICAN TOBACCO COMPANY

Perfect—Hearing!

The New 1916 "Intensitone" model Mears Ear Phone—the world's most successful instrument for the deaf—will positively give you perfect hearing of every sound without blur of any kind. You can try it at our expense. Prove to your own satisfaction that it is the only scientific instrument for the deaf. Write for free trial today.



96 Degrees of Sound

Think of it! This new model has eight adjustments of twelve tones each, thus giving a total of 96 tones, covering every variation the ear can possibly demand. With its use you can clearly hear a sermon, a play, or any tone of conversation. It is the final perfection of an efficient substitute of the natural hearing organs.

New "Intensitone" Model

This superb instrument is so thin it barely can be noticed. It is the most perfect instrument ever invented for relieving deafness. It gathers every whisper of sound clearly and distinctly. A touch of the finger adjusts it.

15 Days' Free Use

Write at once. Get our special low rock bottom direct from the laboratory price—

FREE COUPON

Mears Ear Phone Co., Inc.
Dept. 1103
5 West 34th St., New York

Gentlemen—Please mail to me, free and postpaid, your book on deafness and your offer on free trial of the 96-tone 1916 "Thin" "Intensitone" Model of the Mears Ear Phone. Also send me names of users in my state.

Name

Address

Indisputable Evidence

Mr. Charles McCausland, General Agent for the great Casualty Company of America, with offices at 207 Dickerson Street, Newark, N. J., declares that he owes his success and the distinction he has won in the insurance world to the help of the Mears Ear Phone. Mr. McCausland is a power in insurance circles, and directs the work of a large organization of men. Mr. McCausland writes:

The Mears Ear Phone Co., New York, N. Y.
Gentlemen: After using your Ear Phone for over a year I beg to state that for thirty-four (34) years I was deaf and was greatly handicapped in my business. Since using your Mears Ear Phone I have no difficulty in carrying on my business to better advantage and profit, and also in being able to enjoy Plays, Sermons, Lectures and to use the telephone. Until I commenced using the Mears Ear Phone my hearing was gradually growing worse, but since using it my hearing has greatly improved so that in time I am sure I will be able to discard it entirely and hear as well as any person. I wish everybody could know what a wonderful instrument the Mears Ear Phone is.
Very sincerely yours,

CHAS. McCAUSLAND.

Write for Free Book

Get full particulars of our 15 day free trial offer, and our valuable free book on deafness. If you live in or near New York call for free demonstration, otherwise write. Do it today.

Mears Ear Phone Co., Inc.
Dept. 1103 45 West 34th Street, New York City

